



British couple decide it is too good to eat the cake

LONDON (AP) — A British couple who ordered a \$6,600 wedding cake in the shape of a fairy tale house drawn carriage have decided it is too good to eat. The cake was the centerpiece of a reception after the wedding of the couple, reported. But the couple didn't have the heart to eat the 1.5 metre high, Cinderella-inspired carriage with its purple and white decorations of sponge and white icing. The cake took nine days to make.

64-year-old British mountaineer sets out for Tibet's most sacred peak

LONDON (AP) — Britain's best-known mountaineer, Chris Bonington, is set to be the first man to climb Tibet's most sacred peak, Bonington, the 14,000 ft. high, snow-capped mountain. Bonington, 64, is a six-man team will travel through eastern Tibet, mission to be the first to scale the mountain. The peak, which is named after the Great Snow Mountain by the Tibetan people, is the easternmost of the Himalayas, near the border of China and Nepal. Bonington, who has climbed many of the world's highest peaks, is the first to attempt this climb.

Sundance name not exclusive to Robert Redford

FORT WORTH (AP) — The Sundance name does not belong to one man, Robert Redford, but to a festival, a place, a way of life. Redford, who played the role of a cowboy in the Sundance Kid, said he was named after the festival. The Sundance name is not exclusive to Redford, he said. The Sundance name is a way of life, a way of thinking, a way of being. It is a name that belongs to everyone who loves the festival, the place, the way of life.

Radio's web site to post Goethe's poetry on the Web

LEIPZIG (AP) — To celebrate Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's 250th birthday next year, German radio will post his poetry on the Web. The radio station, which has been broadcasting since 1945, will post his poetry on the Web. The radio station, which has been broadcasting since 1945, will post his poetry on the Web. The radio station, which has been broadcasting since 1945, will post his poetry on the Web.

Cape Verde singer among UNESCO prize winners

AIN-LA-CHAPPELLE (AP) — The UNESCO prize for the best of African music was awarded to Cape Verde singer Cesária Évora. The prize was awarded to her for her album, "Aqui Está a Melhor da Cesária Évora". The prize was awarded to her for her album, "Aqui Está a Melhor da Cesária Évora". The prize was awarded to her for her album, "Aqui Está a Melhor da Cesária Évora".

Regent receives message from Turkish president

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Sunday received Turkish Minister of State Sukru Gural who conveyed to the Regent a message from Turkish President Suleiman Demirel. Prince Hassan and the Turkish minister reviewed bilateral and regional relations. Prince Hassan stressed the need for establishing peace, stability and cooperation in the region on the basis of mutual respect.

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Voicing hope 'a successful end will soon unfold': Regent: Peace dividends intangible as a result of political stalemate

By Alia A. Toukan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Sunday said the much-promised economic peace dividends have failed to materialise over the past two years in the absence of political movement on the Palestinian-Israeli track.

"There is no tangible result to show for all our patience. Yet, we keep indulging ourselves in the hope that a successful end will soon unfold," Prince Hassan told an audience of prominent politicians and academics attending the New Atlantic Initiative (NAI) conference in Amman.

"Whatever economic promises we have made to our people as a result of peace, have been practically belied by the events of the last weeks. In Jordan our economic growth rate has declined to almost zero in 1996," said the Crown Prince.

Prince Hassan noted that trade between Jordan and Israel is barely twenty million dollars per annum, while trade between the Kingdom and the Palestinian territories "is even worse than that of 1984, when the West Bank and Gaza were totally under Israeli control."

Responding to criticisms levelled against Jordan for "pushing" for ties with the Jewish state, the Crown Prince said: "Our insistence in pursuing these [peace] talks is basically motivated by our strategic interest."

"We have been accused by some critics in our constituency of interfering and meddling in the internal affairs of the Palestinians," he said.

"Our response is clear. We do not mediate. We do not represent the Palestinians. They are there as an entity, as an identity, as a people, and it is for the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) to engage in direct negotiations with the government of Israel," continued the Crown Prince, adding that the Kingdom will resume its role as "facilitator."

Prince Hassan added that he



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, shakes hands with U.S. academic Malcolm Hoenlein at the opening conference of U.S. and European academics and politicians in Amman on Sunday (Reuters photo)

'The time has come for a policy review of this region inclusive of Iraq, Libya, Sudan'

believed that officials in the PNA were implementing their security responsibilities in accordance with the Oslo accords.

Speaking on the issue of the U.S. policies on the Middle East, Prince Hassan called for a general policy review of the region.

"I'd like to suggest effectively that the time has come for a policy review of this Middle East region inclusive of Iraq, Libya, Sudan...I would like to suggest that the time has come for a broad-based strategy," he said.

The Crown Prince also dismissed speculation of Jordanian-Turkish-Israeli cooperation, saying "there is no grand design."

"How do we say to the Syrians we have no grand designs with Turkey?" Prince Hassan asked members of the conference, adding that "the isolation of Turkey, and pushing Turkey into a corner is not in the region's interest."

The NAI conference is to move to Tel Aviv on Monday and Tuesday, when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is due to speak.

The NAI, which was established in June 1996 in Washington D.C. as a public policy research centre, began as an effort to debate the new agenda for transatlantic relations.

The state aims are to move toward free trade between an enlarged European Union and the North American free trade area to strengthen global free trade, and to reinvigorate Atlantic institutions of political cooperation and consultation.

Sudan: Relief plane may have spied prior to U.S. strike on pharmaceutical factory

NAIROBI (AP) — Sudan suggested Sunday that a relief plane from a U.N. umbrella group may have spied on behalf of the United States, carrying out surveillance just before the American missile strike on a Sudanese factory.

The Sudanese Foreign Minister, Mustafa Osman Ismail, told reporters in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi that Sudanese suspicions were aroused by the fact that a plane from Operation Lifeline Sudan had been cleared to land just prior to the Aug. 20 U.S. raid, but instead circled the airport, then flew off.

Its flight path took it very close to the targeted factory, he said.

Ismail said Sudan had no direct proof the plane was conducting surveillance on behalf of the United States, but said: "This is our analysis." Representatives of the Kenya-based relief organisation could not immediately be reached for comment. The group has been funneling aid to Sudanese in the country's south who face starvation due to drought and the 15-year civil war between the Islamic government and rebels.

Sudan has long been critical of Operation Lifeline Sudan, accusing it repeatedly in the past of aiding the southern rebels.

Ismail stopped in Kenya en route to Durban, South Africa, for the Non-Aligned Movement meeting. At the gathering, Sudan's President Omar Al Bashir plans to make an issue of the U.S. strike, which came 13 days after twin bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania that killed 258 people.

The U.S. administration said the targeted sites had links to Saudi exile Osama Ben Laden, whom it accuses of inspiring and bankrolling the embassy attacks.

Washington has said the Sudanese plant was manufacturing precursors for VX nerve gas, but Sudan says it was strictly a pharmaceutical manufacturer — a claim Ismail reiterated Sunday.

Sudan, he said, "has got nothing to do with Ben Laden, it has nothing to do with chemicals." The foreign minister also renewed Sudan's calls for an independent fact-finding mission by the United Nations Security Council or a foreign observer group to study competing U.S. and Sudanese claims about the Al Shifa Pharmaceutical Industries Co.'s activities.

He also said that if the plant had been a chemical-weapons factory, the U.S. strike against it would have been "genocide" because the plant, on Khartoum's outskirts, was in a populated area and close to a river that could have been contaminated.

U.S.: No international probe needed for Sudan bombing

WASHINGTON (AFP) — U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Bill Richardson on Sunday rejected calls for a U.N. probe of the American bombing of a Sudanese factory.

"We don't think an investigation is needed," Richardson said on NBC television amid charges the Pentagon may have shelled a plant with no military purpose.

"We don't think anything needs to be put to rest."

Sudan maintains that the Al Shifa factory bombed by five U.S. military cruise missiles on August 20 was purely a pharmaceutical plant making medicines, mostly anti-malaria drugs and syrups for children.

The Khartoum factory, which supplied 50 per cent of Sudan's medicine requirement, was destroyed, leading to an acute shortage of drugs in the African nation.

On Sunday Sudanese Foreign Minister Mustafa Osman Ismail said Sudan would accept a fact-finding mission either from the U.N. Security Council or the U.S. administration "to check once and for all these or any other allegations on terrorism."

But Richardson said the United States does not believe the United Nations needs to get

involved, because Washington has "direct, solid evidence" the plant had military applications and that Sudan has ties with multi-millionaire Saudi exile Osama Ben Laden.

Ben Laden is suspected of orchestrating the deadly bombings of two U.S. embassies in east Africa on August 7. The U.S. strikes against Sudan and against a suspected Islamist base in Afghanistan were in retaliation for that attack.

Richardson said Washington has soil samples from the Sudan plant that indicate the presence of chemical compound EMPFA.

An acronym for ethyl methylphosphonothionate, EMPFA by itself is not toxic but is only two manufacturing steps away from VX nerve agent, a substance that can kill within seconds of contact with skin.

The United States also has evidence of ties between Sudan, Ben Laden and Iraq, he said.

A statement by Sudan that Ben Laden left the country in 1995 and no longer has any links to it is "totally untrue," Richardson said.

The Sudanese "have been known to harbour terrorists. They have been known to have ties with Osama Ben Laden," he said.

"There is a direct linkage between the two."

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hitting the Khartoum factory.

"We are not confronting the U.S.," he said. "We are for mutual dialogue and understanding." Ismail also said he had no opinion of

Kenya's handling over last week of two suspects in the embassy bombing to the United States for trial.

"That's up to the Kenyans, of course," he said.

Kenyans generally greeted the handover with relief, because of fears a terrorist trial could bring new attacks against their country. But some saw the move as giving up too much national sovereignty.

Richardson, Ritter clash over U.S. policy on Iraq

WASHINGTON (AFP) — U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Bill Richardson rejected charges Sunday that Washington had softened its position on U.N. inspections to ensure Iraqi disarmament.

But a former U.S. arms inspector who made that explosive charge and resigned in protest last week contradicted Richardson, saying the United States indeed had changed its policy.

Scott Ritter told ABC television that Washington has secretly acted against to

its stated policy of backing forceful inspections by the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) operating in Iraq.

"Since April...the United States has placed considerable pressure on both the special commission and other supporters in the Security Council such as the United Kingdom to hold off from carrying out inspections that could cause a confrontation with Iraq," Ritter said.

Ritter, a 37-year-old former U.S. Marine accused by Iraq of being a spy, said last week that at least six

intrusive inspections had been stopped since November under pressure from Washington.

He said the United States fears it lacks support from the international community for a confrontation with Baghdad.

Ritter resigned from UNSCOM on Wednesday, saying that he could no longer continue because of the U.S. and U.N. "surrender" to Iraq.

"There's been no change of policy," Richardson said on NBC television. "The

(Continued on page 3)

Israel lifts curfew on Arabs around Jewish enclave

HEBRON (AFP) — Israel's army lifted a curfew on Arab neighbourhoods around the Jewish enclave in Hebron Sunday morning, nine days after the clampdown was imposed following the killing of a settler.

The curfew prevented some 15,000 Palestinians from leaving their homes except during occasional three-hour periods when they were allowed to stock up on provisions.

Before the curfew was lifted, Jewish settlers vandalised a number of Arab homes in the area overnight and Palestinian youths from adjacent areas ruled by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) clashed briefly with Israeli soldiers, witnesses said.

The youths threw stones and empty bottles at soldiers guarding the Jewish enclave who responded with rubber-coated bullets. One youth was slightly wounded by the projectiles, doctors said.

Following the August 20 stabbing to death of Rabbi Shlomo Raanan, 63, in an isolated section of the Jewish settlement, Israeli forces sealed off all of Hebron, a city of 120,000 placed mostly under Palestinian rule since January 1997.

The closure on the autonomous part of the city was lifted Friday.

The closure and curfew had led to severe water shortages in the city and two babies died after their

mothers were prevented from reaching hospital by Israeli army checkpoints, according to Palestinian police and hospital officials.

The Israeli zone covers about 20 per cent of the city where some 400 zealous Jewish settlers live in a state of nearly constant conflict with their Palestinian neighbours.

The PNA has strongly protested the curfew and earlier closure on Hebron as an unjustified collective punishment for the murder of Raanan, whose killer remains at large.

Israel says he was stabbed by a Palestinian activist who then fled into the Palestinian-ruled part of Hebron.

Israel braces for far-right Jewish terror attacks

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel tightened security around government leaders and Jerusalem's Al Aqsa Mosque Sunday after reports that far-right Jewish radicals were plotting terrorist attacks, army radio said.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was due to head a special inter-ministerial meeting Sunday to discuss the danger of Jewish militants carrying out assassinations or anti-Arab attacks to foil any further Israeli withdrawals from the West Bank, officials said.

The Shin Bet secret service also stepped up security around Netanyahu, Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and President Ezer Weizman for fear they could be the targets for assassination, Israeli Radio reported.

Former Labour Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was killed in November 1995

by a right-wing Jewish activist infuriated by his policy of granting limited autonomy to Palestinians in the West Bank.

Israeli security officials have expressed growing concern over the past two weeks about possible actions by Jewish groups to torpedo negotiations with the Palestinians on further land transfers and in response to the murders of three Jewish settlers in the West Bank this month.

"The police and security agencies have carried out certain operations to prevent these kinds of things," Mordechai said on radio when asked about the danger of attacks by far-right Israeli nationalists, notably against the Al Aqsa Mosque compound, the third holiest site in Islam.

He declined to elaborate, but the army said the operations he referred to involved the recent arrest of

some right-wing activists.

"We have to be ready to keep extremists from causing a catastrophe," he said.

Mordechai, considered the leading moderate in Netanyahu's rightist government, dismissed the reported death threats against him.

"I sleep well at night and I have no intention of changing either my habits or my politics," he said.

At the weekly meeting of the full Israeli cabinet Sunday, Netanyahu alluded to threats from the far right, telling ministers: "We need to strengthen teachings against violence in our schools because this is vital for safeguarding the future of democracy," Israeli Radio said.

According to the radio, Sunday's special ministerial meeting was to hear reports from Shin Bet

(Continued on page 3)

NAM divided on disarmament

DURBAN (AFP) — Non-Aligned Movement countries were deadlocked over disarmament in behind-closed-door talks here Sunday, as member states tried to thrash out a resolution for endorsement by a full summit of heads of state this week.

High-level delegations from several unidentified governments had broken away from committee-level talks in a bid to devise an acceptable compromise wording to be put before the summit starting

Wednesday, a NAM secretariat spokesman said.

The disarmament issue was one of several which emphasised the disunity in the disparate 113-nation organisation before foreign ministers were Monday due to begin refining a declaration to be adopted by the heads of state.

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) tabled a draft resolution seeking worldwide condemnation of Uganda and Rwanda for "aggression" on its territory.

Meanwhile, Rwanda accused DRC President Laurent Kabila of training a 10,000-strong militia — including Hutu ex-soldiers — and threatened to send troops to the DRC to defend vulnerable Tutsis.

Ethiopia, locked in a stalemate border conflict with Eritrea in the Horn of Africa, made no great diplomatic effort with its Non-Aligned brother, asking the organisers to move its delegation away from

(Continued on page 3)

in
anon
alcohol

where they wounded Alh
brahim in a similar attack
When they came across
Syrian checkpoint, the
threw a hand grenade at the
soldiers and escaped with
out causing any casualties,
the source said.
Last month a man was
killed in a similar anti-
alcohol attack in Sidon on
where such incidents were
frequent last year.
Syria is the main power
broker in Lebanon with
35,000 troops in the coun-
try.

BRIEF

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Abaza's father was a
cupation of Egypt.

embassies' security
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es, Britain's and others
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is been restricted since the
day. The number of author-
ers responsible for securi-
en reinforced, they said.

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g non-Saudi men arrested
ther police said.

Other Flights	
6:15	Amman to Chicago
6:30	Amman to London
6:45	Amman to Paris
7:00	Amman to Rome
7:15	Amman to Athens
7:30	Amman to Frankfurt
7:45	Amman to Zurich
8:00	Amman to Bern
8:15	Amman to Basel
8:30	Amman to Cologne
8:45	Amman to Munich
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12:45	Amman to Frankfurt

Royal Wings (RW)
8:00 Amman to London
RW
9:30 Amman to Paris
RW
10:45 Amman to Rome
RW
11:30 Amman to Athens

Home News

Regent sends message to Malaysian PM

KUALA LUMPUR (Petra) — Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad has received a message from HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, expressing Jordan's desire to strengthen relations with Malaysia.

The message was delivered by His Majesty King Hussein's advisor Salah Abu Zeid at a meeting with the Malaysian prime minister, who expressed hope for the King's quick recovery.

Mahathir said he looked forward to the Regent visiting Malaysia to discuss means of portraying Islam's true image to the world as well as the economic conditions in southeast Asia.

Meanwhile, Malaysian ambassador to Jordan Ku Jaafar Ku Shabri on Sunday said that nearly 45,000 Malaysian Muslim pilgrims visit Jordan every year on their way to perform 'umra (minor pilgrimage) in Mecca and that 2,077 Malaysian students currently study at Jordanian universities.

Speaking on the eve of Malaysia's national day, the ambassador thanked the Kingdom for the hospitality accorded to the pilgrims and the students.

Economic relations between the two sides have increased steadily, with the volume of trade reaching \$112 million in 1996 and \$135 million in 1997, according to the ambassador.

Malaysia is planning to organise a major fair of its industrial products in Amman and meetings grouping the Jordanian and Malaysian business communities to discuss joint investment projects, he added.

The ambassador said the two countries have already established a business council to regulate economic and trade relations.



PRINCESS RAHMA ATTENDS BLOOD DONATION CAMPAIGN: HRH Princess Rahma on Sunday receives an honorary shield from Sahab Industrial Estate General Manager Amer Majali in appreciation of her participation in a blood donation campaign in the Sahab area. The campaign was organised by Sahab Industrial Estate and the Jordan Blood Bank (Petra photo)

Police investigate Tafileh woman's death

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Police are investigating the death of a 65-year-old woman whose body Sunday was found burnt beyond recognition in the basement of her house in Tafileh, according to official sources.

Murrah Suleiman's body was found by Civil Defence Department (CDD) rescue teams who were called in to extinguish a blaze at her house in Bsseira town, the sources said.

According to the sources the woman, who lived alone, suffered from depression "because she was poor, her husband took a second wife recently and because she had cancer."

"The woman, a mother of two girls, apparently was in despair. At dawn on Sunday, she poured kerosene over her body and lit herself," the sources said.

Police confirmed the incident but refused to comment.

Two police officers killed in accident

Meanwhile, in other incidents in the Kingdom, two police officers were killed and two others were slightly injured in a road collision in Aqaba on Saturday, officials said.

The accident, which involved a large truck and a police patrol vehicle, occurred near the Royal Diving Centre at around 4:00 p.m., the source said.

The source told the Jordan Times that the accident was a result of "wrongful overtaking and the two vehicles collided head on."

The deceased were identified as sergeants Ahmad Saleh, 30, and Omar Awad, 25.

The two other police officers who were injured in the crash were identified as sergeants Tareq Abdullah, 25, and Obeid Abdullah.

The two are being treated at Haya Government Hospital for fractures and bruises and are listed in fair condition," the official added.

Al Ra'i correspondent in Tafileh Ghazi Amerien contributed to this report.

Richardson, Ritter clash over policy

(Continued from page 1)

record shows that the Clinton administration support for UNSCOM, has been unparalleled.

"There have been times where timing and tactics had to be discussed with [top U.N. weapons inspector Richard] Butler. But the record

shows...that because of U.S. action, inspectors like Scott Ritter were able to conduct their inspections," he said.

On CNN television, Richardson said "tuning and tactics" were discussed as part of efforts to build international support in the U.N. Security Council for the U.S. position toward Iraq.

He said, "I don't inspect, don't do this," he said. "This is a U.N. decision. This is Butler's decision. He is very independent."

Richardson heaped praise on the former inspector, calling Ritter "an excellent investigator," "a patriot," and a "good man" who has done "terrific work."

Israel braces for far-right Jewish terror attacks

(Continued from page 1)

chief Ami Ayalon and other police officials on measures taken to protect the Al Aqsa Mosque compound in the Old City of Jerusalem.

The compound is one of the worst flashpoints for Muslim-Jewish conflict because the mosques were built on the site of the former Jewish temple destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD.

The Western retaining wall

of the raised mosque compound, known to Jews as Temple Mount, is the last vestige of the temple and is the holiest site in Judaism.

"An attack on Al Aqsa by a handful of fanatics would cause a bloodbath and an explosion of anger across the Middle East," one senior police official told AFP.

"The worst danger comes from isolated individuals who are not in the Shin Bet files," he said.

A senior Palestinian National Authority security official for his part warned his Israeli counterparts that they would be held responsible for any attacks by Jewish radicals on Palestinians or Muslim holy sites, saying such violence would unleash "an uncontrollable explosion."

A Jewish underground group which carried out anti-Arab attacks in the early 1980s plotted to bomb Al Aqsa Mosque as part of a plan to

rebuild the Jewish temple. The group was dismantled by the Shin Bet before it could act.

Actions by the Israeli government or Jewish militants concerning Al Aqsa always carry the risk of sparking violent protests.

A decision by Netanyahu in September 1996 to open a new entrance to an archaeological tunnel near the mosques provoked three days of rioting across the Palestinian areas which left more than 80 dead.

NAM divided on disarmament

(Continued from page 1)

the Eritreans sitting alongside.

Delegates were also presented with a resolution from Afghanistan — which is represented here by the internationally recognised government, not the Taliban who control most of the country — expressing "concern at the continuing military situation" and calling for a weapons embargo.

What signs there were of diplomatic progress came from outside the talks. Libyan Foreign Minister Omar Montasser flew from the deadlock in Durban across South Africa to meet President Nelson Mandela in Cape Town.

Libyan government sources told AFP in Durban that the two men discussed "possible support" from NAM for Tripoli's latest demand regarding its two nationals suspected of carrying out the 1988 Lockerbie bombing.

Libya wants to negotiate guarantees for the two suspects in the bombing of a Pan Am plane over Lockerbie, Scotland, with the loss of 270 lives, before sending them for trial in the Netherlands.

Mandela, who assumes the NAM chair-

manship Wednesday, has played a prominent role in trying to resolve the impasse, and on Saturday telephoned on the issue by Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi, according to Libyan state television.

Pre-summit predictions that the nuclear issue would be one of the most divisive proved correct.

India and Pakistan, nuclear rivals since both countries defied international opinion with a series of powerful tests in May and June, are both NAM members and central figures in Sunday's discussions.

"Very clearly between the last summit and now there has been a detonation in two countries and this has changed the security situation," NAM secretariat spokesman Abdul Minty told a press conference.

"The Non-Aligned Movement has a long tradition of being opposed to nuclear tests. This summit now has to find a wording on this."

Minty said the group was still discussing "that and other questions" — including the NAM's position on weapons of mass destruction and the issue of land mines.

Earlier, Rwandan Foreign Minister Anastase Gasana told journalists on the

sidelines of the conference that Kabila was training and equipping the militia in Kamina camp in the DRC's south-eastern Katanga province.

"That is a danger for my country Rwanda," said Gasana.

"Genocide knows no borders, knows no frontiers," said Gasana. "A genocide in the Congo may lead us to be involved in this. We have a right to intervene in the DRC to stop genocide."

He charged that the "genocide" was being directed against Rwandan-origin Tutsi Banyamulenge living in eastern DRC. "It has already begun."

U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan is expected to convene a special summit of southern African nations to discuss the DRC crisis following his arrival Wednesday, officials here said.

According to a draft resolution shown to AFP before delegates convened Sunday, the NAM countries "have noted and condemn the aggression against Congo by Uganda and Rwanda."

The document asks countries to reaffirm "the intangibility and inviolability of borders."

what's going on

CONCERTS
* Classical music by Zaid Dirani and band at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.
* Concert by the National Band of Circassian Folklore at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m. (daily until Sept. 4).
LECTURE
* "The Occupied Arab Territories and U.N. Resolutions: South Lebanon as a

Sample: by Mahmoud Sweid of Lebanon at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman at 7:00 p.m.
DARAT AL FUNUN SUMMER 98 FESTIVAL
"Summer 98" cultural activities at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, to last until Sept. 30, include:
EXHIBITIONS
* 50 years of graphic art from Lebanon

and works by Jordanian artist Sabel Hiani at the Main House.
* Works by Iraqi artist Samer Usama and by Jordanian artist Said Haddadin at the Blue House.
* Installation works by Jordanian artist Samia Zaru at the Byzantine Church.
* Exhibition of photographs "Memory of a Place" by Jordanian artist Hussein Da'feh at the Museum.

Information minister pledges to work toward 'professional' journalism

AMMAN (Petra) — Information Minister Nasser Judeh has promised the Jordan Press Association (JPA) to urge the Cabinet and concerned departments to facilitate the work of journalists so that they may publish reports in an objective and professional manner.

During a meeting with JPA President Seif Sharif and council members, Judeh said he was ready to open all channels of dialogue with media representatives and reach an appropriate mechanism with the association to improve media performance.

He urged the association to work hand in hand with the ministry to serve Jordan and enhance the concept of democracy.

The minister called for a "code of honour" to be drawn up by journalists in order to deal with media-related problems and lay the basis for promoting journalism. He added that the main role of the media

is to shed light on problems and provide constructive and objective advice to the government.

Referring to the Press and Publications Law, which has been approved by both houses of Parliament, Judeh said the legislation will be put into force once it has been endorsed by His Majesty King Hussein and published in the official gazette.

"We all have to respect this law and deal with it like any other Jordanian law," he added.

Judeh pledged that the Information Ministry will be flexible and treat all press matters objectively. He expressed hope that the relationship between the ministry and the press will be based on cooperation and open dialogue.

Referring to the proposed Royal commission on the media, Judeh noted that the idea originated with HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and that the Cabinet will have to develop an

appropriate mechanism to establish the body, which he said aims at institutionalising a firm and solid basis for journalism in Jordan.

Judeh also pledged to follow up on the question of providing the JPA with a piece of land on which it can build its headquarters.

The minister said he will study a JPA demand for allocating part of Jordan Television's revenues from commercials to the association under an arrangement between the JPA and newspapers.

The minister said he will also look into the prospect of the Jordan News Agency, Petra, charging the press and other organisations for its services.

For his part, Sharif demanded that the government raise the allowance paid to Petra journalists from 60 per cent to 90 per cent, similar to what he said other professional associations in the country receive. At the meeting, JPA coun-

cil members reviewed a number of issues of concern to the journalists, particularly several articles in the Press and Publications Law and the JPA law. They demanded that the journalists be represented in the Royal commission and enquired about journalists being detained in cases connected with the Press and Publications Law.

The council members also requested that no Jordanian be allowed to write for any newspaper in Jordan or abroad unless he or she is a member of the JPA. They said this measure would hold those trying to harm Jordan's image abroad accountable for their actions.

Judeh and the JPA agreed to hold meetings on the first Sunday of each month beginning in October to discuss issues concerning the media.

Also present at the meeting was Bilal Tal, head of the Press and Publications Department.

Government to require water recycling at car wash garages

By Ahmad Khatib
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The government plans to institute regulations requiring car wash and auto maintenance garages to recycle their water, a Water Ministry official said Sunday.

The regulations are designed to reduce the amount of petroleum residues entering the filters at the country's wastewater treatment plants, the official said.

He added that these proposed regulations are part of efforts to help conserve water following the eight-week-old water pollution crisis.

The official gave no further details and did not say when the new regulations would be issued.

Water Ministry administrators said the idea was not new as it has featured in most of the ministry's water conservation plans and public awareness campaigns.

Several large car wash proprietors said they need at least three cubic metres of water a day to operate their facilities.

Most were forced to close down operations at the height of the water contamination crisis, which halted scarce summer water supplies and forced them to buy water from tankers at black market rates.

One station owner said his facility used a special system that filters water and petroleum products leaving the station.

"According to the law, every licensed station is

required to have a filtering system to refine wastewater leaving it," said one car wash station owner who asked not to be named.

"In addition, our station will soon begin operating its own water recycling system," the owner said.

He and others said they welcomed any feasible solution that might help solve Jordan's chronic water problem.

"We are ready to help and cooperate in finding solutions to our water problem," said Taha Hijawi, owner of the Hijawi Car Wash Station.

"We will study the government's plan once we get it," he told the Jordan Times. "But if it will harm us, then we would prefer to close down our business for good."

Theatres await official decision on release of film 'Nasser'

By Amy Henderson
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Theatre operators around the capital yesterday expressed optimism that the film "Nasser" would make its debut on their screens this week, but the film's Amman distributor yesterday said he had not been informed of a decision reversing last week's ban on the controversial piece.

"I read what was published in the Arabic dailies, and am surprised," said Mohammad Neirab, the distributor. "I know that [Minister of Information] Nasser Judeh watched the film [Saturday], and that it was with the committee at the Press and Publications Department Sunday. I know of no decision."

Press reports yesterday quoted unnamed officials as saying Judeh had personally reviewed the movie and given it approval to show as long as some scenes were edited.

The Amman Theatre in Jabal Weibdeh and the Concord Cinema in Shmeisani said yesterday they hoped to premier the movie depicting the life of former Egyptian President Gamal Abdul Nasser as early as Tuesday.

Last week, the committee responsible for monitoring audiovisual media at the

PPD banned the movie, directed by renowned Syrian director Anwar Qowadri, for "violating audiovisual content regulations." The committee did not elaborate further.

Qowadri and Neirab were later verbally informed that the movie "presented a false impression of Jordan and its role in the region in some scenes."

Qowadri said at the time he was "shocked" by the decision after having been advised by His Majesty King Hussein during the production of the movie, but anyway offered to cut out three minutes worth of "offensive" scenes — an offer that was reported to be refused by the PPD.

Neirab told the Jordan Times that the PPD had been particularly provoked by a scene depicting a telephone conversation between Nasser and King Hussein during the fall disturbances of 1970.

The film opened in Cairo last month, causing a stir in political circles which claimed that the movie is an attack on the biography of Abdul Hakim Amr, the Egyptian chief of staff during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. It has been shown at theatres throughout the region, including Syria, and was featured in an Arab film festival in Paris.

Last week, Qowadri was quoted in Arabic dailies as saying that the decision to ban the movie was "astounding in light of Jordan's courageous decision to premier Al Risaleh when no other Arab capital would show the film. Considering Jordan's democratic path, the decision raises questions."

Al Risaleh (The Message), a film about the message of Islam, was banned in all Levantine capitals except Amman. The film described Islam's origins in Mecca, the revelation of the Koran to the Prophet Muhammad through the Archangel Gabriel, his preaching and the conquest of Mecca. Some Muslims said the film was sacrilegious.

Madaba police continue search for missing child

MADABA (J.T.) — Police and residents of Faisaliyeh town in the Madaba governorate are continuing their search for a 12-year-old child who was reported missing 10 days ago.

The parents of the child, May Hazzaa, a seventh-grader, said she left home around 9:00 a.m. on Aug. 22 to take a make-up examination at her school but failed to return.

They said eyewitnesses reported that she went to a local bakery and a store instead of going to the school. The eyewitnesses said they last saw her walking down the town's main road, the parents added.

When the girl failed to return home, her father, an oil tanker truck driver, said he looked for her at school and was joined later by other family members and relatives in the search. The group also visited a number of homes in the town and other places where she could have gone.

The police then launched a wide-scale campaign assisted by her relatives to find the missing girl, searching various areas in the Madaba governorate, including caves, wells and hills.

The child's parents have issued a public appeal for information that might lead them to their missing daughter.

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rebels withdraw from key Congo port town'

KINSHASA, Congo (AP) — Angolan forces fighting on behalf of President Laurent Kabila have captured the port town of Matadi, one of the last rebel strongholds in southwestern Congo, state-controlled radio reported Sunday.

A ministry-level government official confirmed the report and said rebel forces who had been in control of Matadi for the past several weeks had withdrawn and left the city to advancing Angolan soldiers.

"We're in control of Matadi and are securing the area around it," the official said on condition of anonymity.

State-controlled Voice of the People radio also said a key power dam at the town of Inga had been recaptured by Congo's allies, although electricity to Kinshasa had not yet been restored.

"This is due to a technical fault," Deputy Interior Minister Faustin Munene said during the radio broadcast.

But a rebel leader Saturday told reporters in the eastern stronghold of Goma that his forces still controlled an airbase at Matadi, about 350 kilometres southwest of Kinshasa.

Jean-Pierre Ondekane, a senior rebel commander, had earlier given a tacit warning

that the Inga dam would be destroyed if Angolan troops tried to take it.

"It is because the foreign troops want to come in, there will be war there. And in a war one assumes that the missiles and bombs could easily destroy the wires, towers and the dam itself," he said.

Elsewhere, Kinshasa was quiet Sunday morning a night after gunfire rattled the city's west side. Firefighters west of the downtown area broke out shortly before a nightly curfew went into effect at 6 p.m.

Government troops along with Angolan and Zimbabwean allied forces continued to search door-to-door for suspected insurgent fighters who last week tried to stage an assault on Kinshasa.

The rebels were pushed back from Kinshasa's airport and were contained in several eastern and western suburbs.

Days of heavy fighting took a heavy toll in the eastern Kinshasa and Masina districts, where bodies littered the streets, Health Minister Jean-Baptiste Songi said.

Despite recent losses, the rebel leadership said the effort to oust Kabila is still alive.

"They say the war is over but I say the war is not finished," Ondekane. "We're in Kinshasa fighting. The situation is going well."

But officials say hundreds and perhaps thousands of rebel fighters have surrendered or been killed just in the past few days of fighting.

Kabila won the support of several neighbouring countries after insisting the Congolese rebellion was in fact an invasion by neighbouring Rwanda and Uganda.

Rwanda has denied its involvement in the conflict, but Saturday Rwandan Foreign Minister Anastase Gasana reiterated warnings his government will send troops into Congo if peace efforts fail.

Rwanda will have "no choice but to intervene militarily to rescue Rwandese ... as well as some Congolese ... who do not support the killings," Gasana told reporters at a Nonaligned Movement summit in South Africa.

Fifty-one heads of state are scheduled to attend the summit, and participants are expected to discuss the Congo war. Kabila has chosen to send his foreign minister Jean-Charles Okoto Lolakombe, summit organisers said.

Congolese rebels indicated Friday they would send a delegation, the South African Press Association reported.



Early morning well-wishers examine some of the tributes to Diana, Princess of Wales, left at the gates of her former home, Kensington Palace in London (Reuters photo)

Tourists outnumber Britons mourning Diana

LONDON (R) — Tourists outnumbered Britons Sunday as mourners laid bouquets outside the London home of Princess Diana to commemorate the first anniversary of her death.

They came from afar as far as New Zealand to pay tribute outside Kensington Palace, posing for photographs after laying flowers and cards before its black and gold gates.

"Last year it was all so unreal — now it's real and it hurts more than ever," said American Heather Pritchard who flew in from Arizona to pay homage to "The People's Princess".

"Always on our minds, forever in our hearts," read one poignant message left by the gates.

Diana's death last Aug. 31 produced a national outpouring of grief in Britain that mirrored the collective emotional crisis that Americans suffered after the 1963 assassination of President John Kennedy.

This time, the grieving is much more muted. The reserved British have stiffened their upper lips once more and opinion polls show they are suffering from "Diana Fatigue" after being deluged with Diana

memorabilia and memoirs. It was a far cry from the sea of flowers that covered the gates last year as poetry and passion were dredged up from the souls of the grieving thousands to express what they felt.

Queen Elizabeth, who has sought to emulate Diana by adopting a gentler touch and making herself more approachable to her subjects, has called for low-key commemorations to mark the first anniversary Monday of Diana's death.

Memorial services were held across the country to remember Diana whose stunning beauty and compassion for the deprived combined to make her the most photographed and famous woman in the world.

The royal family, who invited Prime Minister Tony Blair to join them for the weekend at their Balmoral estate in Scotland, went to Sunday service at their local Catholic church.

Hundreds lined the village street outside the church to cheer and welcome the royal family in its convoy of Rolls-Royce cars.

Princess William, 16, and Harry, 13, who bowed their heads in grief as they walked behind their mother's coffin a year ago, have

joined heir-to-the-throne Prince Charles, whose popularity has soared in polls since Diana's death.

The boys have asked to be left in peace over the weekend to mourn in private for their mother, snatched from them when she was just 36 years old.

Charles, once an aloof figure overshadowed by his glamorous ex-wife, has sought to be more approachable to the media and also, as a single parent, reorganised his packed official schedule to spend more time with his sons.

Diana's death still left many Britons in reflective mood.

Sir Elton John, who sang "Candle in the Wind" so movingly at her funeral, felt sad that she was buried "all alone again" on an island at the family's Althorp estate and not in Westminster Abbey where everyone could more easily pay tribute.

In an epitaph for the lonely royal superstar, he said: "One of her problems was that she didn't know who to trust. She made a few mistakes about who she trusted and they betrayed her. So she became very, very careful about who she confided in."

Tortured activist plans lawsuit against Suharto son-in-law

JAKARTA (AFP) — A kidnapped political activist plans to file a lawsuit against ex-president Suharto's son-in-law for his involvement in the abduction and torture of scores of activists, press reports said Sunday.

Activist Pius Lustrilang, who was released by his captors earlier in the year, plans to sue ex-special forces chief Lieutenant General Prabowo Subianto for ordering the kidnappings, the Suara Pembaruan evening daily reported.

Armed Forces Chief General Wiranto Monday announced that Prabowo, once seen as a potential successor to Suharto, had been honourably discharged from the armed forces, citing the allegations of abduction and torture of activists earlier this year.

The decision, based on the findings of a high-level

military officers' probe, also saw two other senior officers of the Kopassus elite force stripped of all posts though they were allowed to stay in the army.

Wiranto said the three could still be brought before a military tribunal should there be enough evidence from the court martial of seven Kopassus non-commissioned officers and three soldiers implicated in the same case.

Trimedya Panjaitan who holds power of attorney for Lustrilang, said he and his client doubted the military's seriousness in prosecuting Prabowo, the Pembaruan reported.

"We doubt the military's independence. Just look at the way they have managed to take the Trisakti University case back to the drawing board," Panjaitan was quoted as saying by Suara Pembaruan.

He was referring to the

prosecution evidence, dismissed as a cover-up by the defence, in the trial of two police officers implicated in the shooting deaths of six students during a peaceful pro-reform rally in May.

The military inquiry team has said Prabowo had admitted during the 15-day long inquiry earlier this month to misinterpreting orders from a superior.

But the council has shed no light on what the order was or who had issued it.

At least 24 activists had been missing since early this year and the nine who have resurfaced have told stories of forced abduction and torture as well as solitary detention. One was found dead.

Wiranto's move had a lukewarm reception among activists, who said the decision was too lenient and would do little to improve the military's image.

NEWS IN BRIEF

U.K. Ibiza consul quits over 'degenerate' tourists

LONDON (R) — Britain's vice-consul on the Spanish holiday island of Ibiza has quit, saying he was ashamed to be British after dealing with so many "degenerate tourists". "I became so angry at the degrading behaviour and the bad name Britain is getting in Europe, I knew it was time to leave," Michael Birkett told the Mail Sunday when quitting his post. "I have always been proud to be British but these degenerates are dragging us through the mud. The young people are out of control," he said. The Balearic island, boasting one of the liveliest nightclubs and scenes in Europe, has become a magnet for holiday-making young Britons and acquired a reputation for drugs, drunkenness and sexual licence. Birkett resigned after spending 18 months dealing with drug overdoses, crime and traffic accidents. One Ibiza newspaper branded British holidaymakers "animals".

Europe's biggest carnival opens in London

LONDON (R) — Europe's largest carnival began Sunday with West Indians taking to the streets of London's Notting Hill district to mark the 50th anniversary of the first big post-World War II wave of Caribbean immigration to Britain. Up to two million people are expected to descend on the northern part west London's borough of Kensington over the next two days as it rings to the sound of 40 steel bands. The carnival, held since 1965, this year coincides with preparations to deal with tens of thousands of people expected to converge 1-1/2 km to the south for a Princess Diana memorial vigil outside Kensington Palace. The parkland palace was home to the princess who died in a car crash in Paris last August 31. About 3,000 extra police have been drafted in to the Notting Hill area to ensure no trouble flares at the carnival, which this year has special significance for Caribbeans who have made their home in multicultural Britain. "I think it is very important that people recognise the event is a showcase for creativity and not necessarily public disorder," said organising chairman Ansel Wong. The carnival was saved at the last moment from curtailment when flamboyant entrepreneur Richard Branson stepped in as the main sponsor after the organisers reported a £350,000 (\$575,000) budgetary shortfall.

Planes forced to avoid vehicle on runway

HONG KONG (AP) — Two planes were forced to make last-minute manoeuvres to avoid hitting a fire services vehicle that drove across the runway of Hong Kong's new airport, the government said Sunday. The Civil Aviation Department said a Cathay Pacific Airways aircraft preparing to take off last Tuesday had to stop when it spotted the vehicle. Airport traffic controllers also had to command an in-bound Chinese Eastern jet to abort its landing, it said. The department is investigating why the vehicle appeared on the runway. The \$20.1 billion Chek Lap Kok airport has been hit by a series of computer and mechanical glitches since it opened in July. The airport only began handling air cargo at full capacity last week.

Police find huge marijuana field in northern California

SAN FRANCISCO (AFP) — Police in northern California have found one of the biggest marijuana farms in the history of the state with a crop estimated at \$84 million, news reports said Sunday. The farm southeast of here contained 21,161 plants. It was more than five times larger than the marijuana field of 3-4,000 plants that the police find on average once a year. Sergeant Jim Arata of the Santa Clara County sheriff's department said the plants were on land owned by the San Francisco waterworks department. He said he spotted them on a helicopter patrol because they were unusually green for the region and the time of year. The plants, between 1.5 and two metres high, were ready for harvest in two weeks' time, each one yielding one pound of high-quality cannabis, Arata said. Police said between eight and 15 people worked on the farm, which was watered by a clever system of pipes fed by underground springs. No arrests have been made. Police suspect the growers came from Mexico because of the arrangement of the plants and some Spanish-language newspapers found at the site.

Bonnie, Danielle stick to ocean routes

WASHINGTON (AFP) — As tropical storm Bonnie headed deeper into the north Atlantic early Sunday, hurricane Danielle stayed clear of land, moving northwestward off the Bahamas. Bonnie, which last week swelled into a Category 3 hurricane capable of damaging buildings, was located 355 kilometres southwest of St. Johns, Newfoundland, the U.S. National Weather Service said in a 0900 GMT advisory. Packing sustained winds of 95 kilometres per hour, Bonnie was expected to take an eastwards turn over the next 24 hours. Meteorologist Miles Lawrence said the storm could eventually get absorbed by a large low-pressure system in the North Atlantic. Last week, hurricane Bonnie triggered the evacuation of 500,000 residents of the southeastern U.S. coast as it dumped rain, uprooted trees and slammed into houses in North Carolina and southern Virginia. Meanwhile, Hurricane Danielle, whose centre was 415 kilometres east of Abaco Island in the northern Bahamas, was moving at 17 kilometres an hour in a west-northwest direction. Lawrence said Danielle was expected to stay clear of landfall. Any impact from Danielle would be confined to swells over the eastern beaches of the Bahamas. Danielle "is not terribly strong at this time," he said. "It won't be anything like Bonnie was."

Congo condemns Ugandan, Rwandan 'aggression'

DURBAN, South Africa (AFP) — The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) was Sunday seeking to have the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) condemn Uganda and Rwanda for "aggression" on its territory.

DRC delegates told AFP they would seek to have the 113-member NAM adopt a resolution for inclusion in a declaration by heads of state next week.

According to a draft resolution shown to AFP before delegates convened Sunday, the NAM countries "have noted and condemn the aggression against Congo by Uganda and Rwanda."

The document asks countries to reaffirm "the intangibility and inviolability of borders."

The draft demands that "Uganda and Rwanda respect

the territorial integrity of the DRC, demanding the withdrawal of troops and encouraging the help of friendly countries."

The acting head of Kinshasa's delegation, Kikaya bin Karubi, said President Laurent Kabila's government had been consulted on the resolution's chief demands, "the withdrawal of troops" from Uganda and Rwanda, and a call for assistance from friendly nations.

Bin Karubi, who is Kinshasa's ambassador to key military ally Zimbabwe, told AFP the call for assistance included military aid, and was aimed at Southern African Development Community (SADC) member-states.

SADC members Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe are providing Kabila with military

aid to repel a Tutsi-led rebellion supported by Uganda and Rwanda.

A Ugandan delegate said he was aware of the draft and delegates would discuss it Sunday, but he would make no further comment.

The DRC crisis is to be discussed by regional heads of state in a special meeting with U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan at the NAM summit, probably Wednesday, officials here said.

NAM foreign ministers Monday and Tuesday will streamline proposals to be set before a full summit of heads of state and government Wednesday and Thursday.

The heads of state will issue a declaration on the last day of the summit outlining the organisation's agenda for the coming three years.

Internet use produces depression, loneliness

WASHINGTON (AFP) — A pioneering research study shows that surfing the Internet, for even a few hours a week, leads to higher levels of depression and loneliness, the New York Times said Sunday.

The \$1.5 million project — described as the first concentrated study of the psychological effects of Internet use at home — found the Internet created a decline in psychological well-being even in people without tendencies towards depression, the study said.

The study completely contradicted the expectations of the social scientists who designed it and surprised the high technology firms that financed it, including Apple Computer, Intel Corp and Hewlett Packard.

"We were shocked by the findings, because they are counterintuitive to what we

know about how socially the Internet is being used," Robert Kraut, a social psychology professor at Carnegie-Mellon University, is quoted as saying. "We are not talking about extremes. These were normal adults and their families, and on average, for those who used the Net most, things got worse," Kraut is quoted as saying.

The study, titled "HomeNet," tracked 169 people from four schools and community groups in the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania area for either a one-year or two-year period.

It found that one hour a week on the Internet led to an average one per cent increase on the depression scale (of zero at the low end to three at the high end); a loss of 2.7 members of the average social circle of 66 people; and an increase of four-tenths of one per cent on the

loneliness scale of one to five.

Cyber relationships — maintained through e-mail with no face-to-face contact — do not provide the mutual support and warmth that contribute to a person's sense of psychological security and happiness, the researchers are reported to have concluded.

"Our hypothesis is there are more cases where you're building shallow relationships, leading to an overall decline in feeling of connection to other people," Kraut is quoted as saying.

Social scientists predicted the study would spark a national debate on the benefits of technology and how public policy should shape it.

The study is due to be published this week in The American Psychologist, the journal of the American Psychological Association.

Runaway weather balloon lost in Arctic

LONDON (AP) — A runaway weather balloon which proved to be tougher than Canada's top guns is lost in the Arctic.

The 100-metre-high balloon disappeared off radar screens late Saturday night about 320 kms north of the Arctic Circle and was still missing Sunday morning, said Halli Sigurdsson, deputy director of Air Traffic Services in Iceland.

"The balloon is lost —

we lost it," he said.

Sigurdsson said a U.S. Navy P-3 Orion maritime patrol aircraft took off Sunday morning from the NATO military base at Keflavik on Iceland's southwest coast to search for the errant balloon.

"They are heading to the point where they lost the balloon and they will start a search from that position," he told The Associated Press in a telephone interview.

The balloon, an

unstaffed research station used to observe weather patterns, can be seen from about 70 kilometres away. It is not equipped with transponders that emit navigation signals to alert airliners to its presence.

Air traffic controllers in Iceland had been diverting planes from the balloon's path.

"This is obviously a much worse situation — not knowing where it is then when we knew

where it was and we could route air traffic around it," Sigurdsson said.

Aircraft from Canada, Britain and the U.S. military in Iceland had tracked the runaway balloon. Canadian jet fighters Thursday fired more than 1,000 rounds into the helium-filled balloon but it remained aloft.

Saturday, when the balloon came close to Iceland, a volcanic island nation in the North

Atlantic just under the Arctic Circle, the U.S. military picked it up on radar. The U.S. military aircraft tracking the balloon then landed.

"When the balloon went north of Iceland, the U.S. military lost it off radar," he said, noting that it disappeared between 2300 and 2400 GMT Saturday. "At the time, they had no aircraft flying to follow the balloon."

The 25-story balloon, which flattened out

would cover five football fields, was launched before dawn Monday from Vancouver, just outside Saskatoon, in Canada to measure ozone levels over Canada.

The project was a joint effort between the Canadian Space Agency, Environment Canada, the Centre for Research in Earth and Space Technology, the University of Toronto, York University and the University of Denver.

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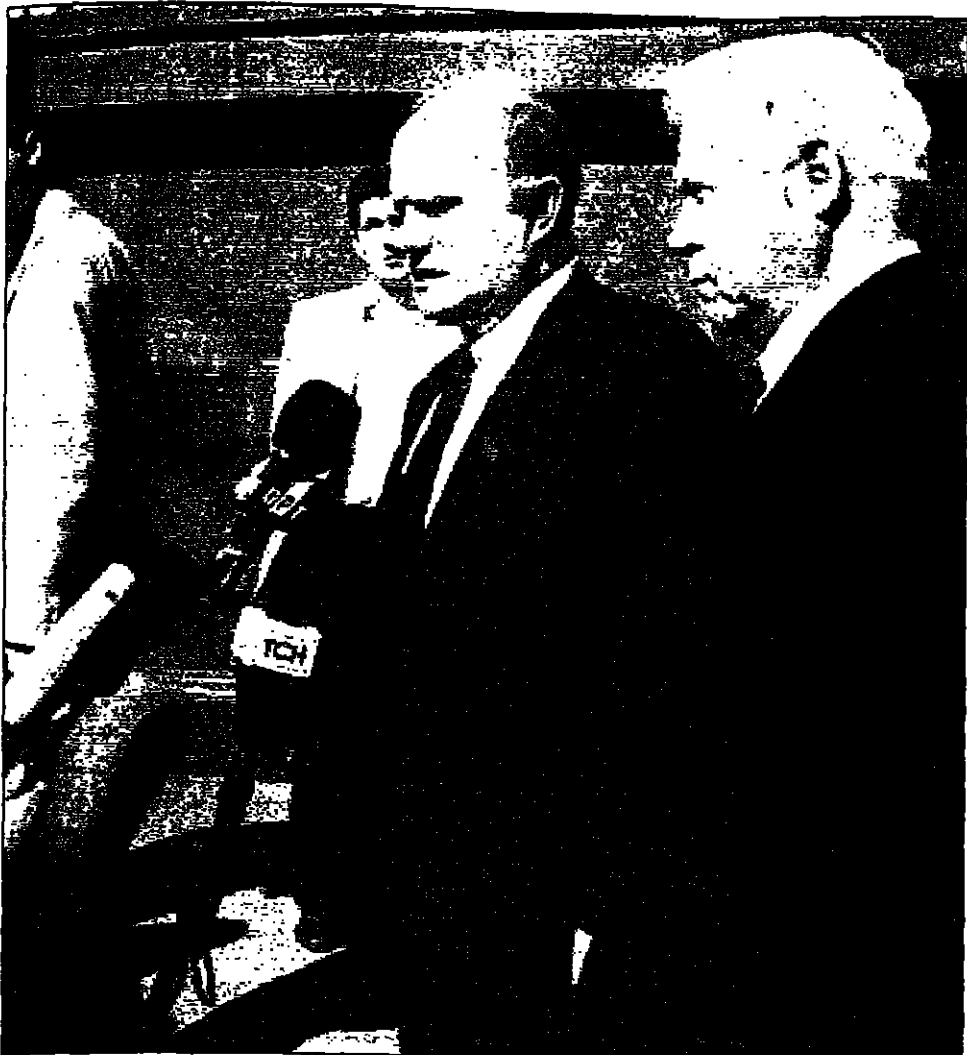
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World News



Russian Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov (second right) and his deputy Valentin Kuptsov (right) address journalists after leaders of the Communist-led lower house of parliament approved a deal with acting Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin aimed at building a political consensus to save Russia from economic collapse (Reuters photo)

Russian government, lawmakers agree to 18 months of political peace

MOSCOW (AP) — Russia's interim government and parliamentary leaders agreed Sunday to an 18-month truce that would leave Boris Yeltsin in control and give the administration time to try to end the country's economic and political crisis.

Under the tentative agreement, Communists and their allies agreed to give swift confirmation to acting Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and said they would not try to topple the government for 18 months.

In exchange, President Yeltsin will consult lawmakers on cabinet appointments and will not dissolve parliament during the same period, Russian media reported.

The agreement comes after nearly a week of uncertainty about who was in charge of Russia while the economy is in a tailspin.

While Yeltsin would be obliged to consult parliament on key issues, the agreement appeared to

leave him with substantial political power.

The agreement would provide a political truce until parliamentary elections scheduled for December 1999. Under the Russian constitution, the parliament has little authority and opposition leaders had demanded some form of power sharing, but the pact appeared to stop short of that.

Yeltsin was forced to go on national television Friday to reiterate he would not resign before his term ends in 2000 and Chernomyrdin followed Saturday with reassurances that there will be no return to the Soviet system.

"Maybe we would have liked some sections of the documents to be tougher," said Gennady Seleznyov, a Communist who is speaker of the state Duma.

"But we must take into consideration that there are seven factions in the state Duma, there is the president, the government and the Federation Council," he

said, according to the ITAR-Tass news agency.

The Federation Council is the upper chamber of parliament and the state Duma, the lower. The Duma is scheduled to meet Monday to consider Chernomyrdin's appointment, and Alexander Shokhin, the head of his parliamentary faction predicted he would be approved on the first vote.

Chernomyrdin said Saturday the negotiations on the political agreement were difficult in part because they are historic.

"This is the first time in six years that we are coming to agreement on the definition of the problems in which Russia finds herself," he said, according to the Interfax news agency.

The agreement was sent to Yeltsin to sign at his country residence outside of Moscow, said Vladimir Ryzhkov, deputy speaker of the Duma.

It could yet be derailed by some of the smaller parties who were still seeking

amendments.

The Communists want some changes made to the terms of IMF loans to Russia, said the chairman of their allied Agrarian Party, Nikolai Kharitonov. They also want Yeltsin to be forced to consult them on an alternative candidate for prime minister if they reject Chernomyrdin.

Yeltsin now has the authority to dissolve parliament if they reject his candidate three times.

Chernomyrdin — whose ability to carry out economic reforms has been questioned in the past — vowed in a scripted TV interview Saturday that there will be no return to the Soviet system.

"We have already joined the world economy, and there will be no return to the past," Chernomyrdin said, promising to keep the ruble convertible, shore up the wobbly banking system and protect depositors.

"The main thing is to make sure people don't suffer," he said, looking

straight at the camera. "For this we should use our power, and we will use it as much as necessary."

"You can be calm. You will get your savings," he said. Yeltsin brought Chernomyrdin back as prime minister a week ago because he hoped the familiar figure would restore confidence in the government, badly damaged by the ruble's sharp decline.

The situation showed a few signs of nascent recovery. After sharp drops last week, the ruble bounced back a bit in Moscow street sales and demand was high enough that some exchange booths ran out of the Russian currency.

The crisis has been building all summer as Russia's financial markets collapsed, hit by the growing global crisis in developing markets. The economic turmoil forced the government to devalue the ruble two weeks ago, which triggered a larger crisis of confidence in Yeltsin's government.

North Korea to allow outside inspection of suspect nuclear site

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea has told the United States that it is willing to allow an outside inspection of an underground construction site suspected of being a nuclear project, South Korea's Yonhap news agency said Sunday.

The national news agency, quoting an unidentified source in Washington, said the inspection will be a main issue when both sides resume

high-level talks in New York Monday.

"North Korea has denied that the underground facility being built is nuclear-related and expressed willingness to allow an outside inspection," Yonhap quoted the source as saying.

Charles Kartman, a U.S. ambassador-at-large, and Vice North Korean Foreign Minister Kim Gye Gwan met three times in New York last

week to discuss nuclear and other pending issues between the two countries.

The talks adjourned Tuesday and will reopen Monday.

One of the top issues discussed at the talks last week was allegations that North Korea was working on a nuclear project at an underground complex in a mountain-side 40 kilometres north-east of Yongbyon, the coun-

try's main nuclear complex.

It was at the Yongbyon nuclear facility that North Korea was believed to have made enough plutonium for one or two atomic bombs before a 1994 accord, under which the communist country agreed to freeze and eventually dismantle its suspect nuclear weapons programme.

The United States says it has no evidence that North Korea has broken the so-

called Agreed Framework, although it raised suspicion that the huge underground work under way may be nuclear-related.

While denying the U.S. allegations, North Korea complained that Washington is not holding up its end of the 1994 agreement by providing 500,000 tonnes of heavy fuel oil per year.

The fuel oil and two nuclear power plants worth \$4.6 bil-

lion oil are a reward for the North's promise to stop developing nuclear weapons.

Of the 500,000 tonnes of fuel oil for this year, the United States so far has shipped 216,000 tonnes, North Korea complains that the shipment is behind schedule.

At the New York talks, North Korea also told U.S. officials that it would return to four-way Korean peace talks

if Washington eases or lifts an economic embargo imposed on it since the 1953 end of the Korean war, Yonhap said.

The four-way talks, involving the two Koreas, the United States and China, have not been held since March because of disputes over agenda and other procedural matters.

Also discussed in New York were a U.S. demand for a halt to North Korea's develop-

ment and exports of Scud missiles to Iran, Syria and other Middle East countries, Yonhap said.

The United States is expected to offer an additional food supply to ally North Korea, Yonhap said. Famine-hit North Korea has been relying on outside aid to feed its 24 million people.

The United States fought on South Korea's side in the three-year Korean war.

Albright tells Croatia democracy is key to Europe

ZAGREB (R) — U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright clashed with Croatian President Franjo Tudjman Sunday over his country's democratic credentials and ties with ethnic Croats in neighbouring Bosnia.

Albright, starting a two-day Balkan tour, said Washington wanted to see the former Yugoslav republic join mainstream Europe but had "important concerns ... about the state of democracy in Croatia."

"What we urge is political reform and respect for a free media so that there is a level playing field for all," she said at a joint news conference with Tudjman, who has led Croatia since it split from Yugoslavia in 1991.

Albright also admitted publicly to a disagreement with Zagreb on its protective relationship to the Bosnian Croats, outnumbered by Muslims and Serbs in the Bosnian state that took shape following a 1992-95 ethnic

war.

"We believe that it is very important for the Bosnian Croats to be able to act independently and to be a part of their country in such a way that they can contribute to the development of Bosnia itself," she declared.

Tudjman rejected Albright's charges on both counts.

"The main problem in the cooperation between the United States and Croatia is the problem of Bosnia," he said, charging that "unacceptable" attempts were under way to "silently revise" the Dayton agreement that ended the Bosnian war.

The U.S.-brokered Dayton accord created a two-part Bosnian state consisting of a Serb republic and a Muslim-Croat federation.

"Croatia ... is obliged by its constitution to take care of Croats outside the Republic of Croatia," he said, adding that Bosnian Croats had been threatened by both Serb and Muslim "aggression." He did

not elaborate.

The Croatian leader also dismissed charges that his government was undemocratic. He said the widely-criticised state-controlled television merely reflected the make-up of the country's elected parliament.

"We expect that the government of the United States will carefully listen to all sides and all arguments," he said.

The wide divergences between Albright and Tudjman at their news conference apparently reflected their hour-long talks, after which one U.S. official mouthed the word "awful" at reporters.

Albright and other officials praised Croatia for taking steps to benefit its minority Serb population, but said Washington was still worried by a Serb exodus.

But one official made clear Washington could not accept a recent statement by Defence Minister Andrija Hebrang that there were no boundaries between Croats.

"There are boundaries," the official said. "Just as we don't support the idea of a greater Serbia, so we don't support the idea of a greater Croatia."

In remarks later to independent journalists, Albright stressed that Croatia must meet European standards if it wanted to join groups like NATO's Partnership for Peace.

"We have said that Croatia can rejoin Europe, but only as an open and democratic society," she said.

"And we believe that it takes a good deal more than elections to build democracy. It requires respect for the rule of law and minority views. And it requires an independent media to keep leaders accountable."

Albright was spending just a morning in Zagreb before heading on to her main destination Bosnia, where she planned to show support for September's general election and promote the cause of Western-backed candidates.

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New political party launched in Australia to counter racism

SYDNEY (AFP) — Australia's ethnic leaders launched a new political force Sunday to fight the envy and hatred they claim has been whipped up by the rightwing One Nation party.

The Unity Party said it aims to reduce the chances of populist politician Pauline Hanson in the general election on Oct. 3.

"The threat of One Nation is real and must be stopped now," said Australian-born party leader Jason Yar-Sen Li, who quit his job as a United Nations barrister to head the campaign.

"Many people have dismissed the One Nation threat as frivolous, or ignorant, or naive, or unlikely to succeed because it is an extreme rightwing party, but it has sophisticated and broad-ranging policies."

One Nation has attracted widespread criticism from

churches, businesses, students and political leaders worldwide for its opposition to immigration, foreign investment and Aboriginal funding.

But it could play a crucial role in the upcoming polls and end up holding the balance of power in one or both houses of parliament.

The country was thrown into turmoil when One Nation won 23 per cent of the vote in Queensland state elections in June.

Li said Hanson had already had a profound influence on politics and accused Prime Minister John Howard of sweeping racism under the carpet as an election issue.

"Multiculturalism is not a dirty word," he said. "We must resist the government's attempts to make this election one based exclusively on tax and eco-

nomics. There is another issue just as important, if not more, and that is social cohesion."

Howard has repeatedly come under fire from ethnic groups for failing to halt the Hanson bandwagon. Critics also point to the abolition of the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the Bureau of Immigration and the Multicultural and Population Research body as well as the passing of a bill to dilute Aboriginal land rights.

The conservative coalition government's anti-racism strategy, promised as part of its election campaign in 1996, has been delayed and downsized.

The Unity Party says in its policy document it wants to dispel distrust based on race, colour or culture, maintain the policy of multiculturalism and immigra-

tion without discrimination and assist Australia's indigenous community.

It will work towards an egalitarian and pluralistic society and redress the balance by putting more ethnic politicians into parliament.

"Our purpose is to ensure that Australia remains as a nation where people of every race, culture and religion live in mutual respect and equality," the document said.

However, with less than 50,000 Australian dollars (\$29,000) in the party coffers it is unlikely to play a significant role in the upcoming polls, although it will put up three senate candidates.

Party officials are philosophical, saying 1,000 people are signed up, branches are running in three states and there is only one way forward.

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Jordan Times

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The price of fallout

THE DISMAL results of a recent opinion poll on the public's approval of the new government were certainly shocking.

One might have thought that the public, after having suffered so many months of officials' arrogance and unwillingness to deal with the citizenry in a trustworthy manner, would demonstrate a sense of public relief at any change in government.

Instead, Jordanians gave the new government the lowest approval rating since early 1996, when the first of such polls was conducted.

The statistics, however, are more a consequence of the actions of the last government than a disapproval of our new Cabinet, and sadly, they reflect just how low confidence in government has fallen.

The government of Fayed Tarawneh is now faced with a daunting mandate. The responsibility of fighting nepotism, stemming unemployment and alleviating poverty are just a few of the new team's tasks. They were also among those assigned to the failed Majali government, thus rendering these duties even more intimidating.

Fortunately, the opinion poll indicated that people believe that relations have not been so badly battered that all is lost. More than half of those surveyed responded that it was still within the government's power to regain the public trust.

Although the government's ratings were low compared to those of its predecessors, statistics also showed a high level of public optimism that the government was capable of accomplishing many of its stated goals. Again, more than half the public expressed their faith that Tarawneh and his team would be able to ease the economic situation and to combat corruption.

Moreover, the poll indicated that Jordanians are not politically apathetic, but in fact are eager for a government of leaders who can act transparently and speak truthfully.

The message in these results is not that our new government is incapable. The executive's capability is a judgement we reserve for another day. Rather, the poll served as a poignant example of the extent to which our confidence in public officials can fall when they fail to acknowledge the public's intelligence and act transparently and democratically. Future governments, for your sake as well as that of the public, please take note.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Fahed Fanek discussed the results of a survey conducted by Jordan University's Centre for Strategic Studies (CSS), in which a mere 25 per cent of those polled said they believed in the new government's ability to manage the responsibilities facing them. The turmoil of the past weeks has led people to take a cautious stance towards government in general, hence people are unlikely to give credit to the new government before they see some concrete results of its policies, argues Fanek. Thus, given a choice of black or white — pro or con, but no "mediocre" — those questioned did not opt to give Tarawneh's government the benefit of the doubt, but remained sceptical. The writer believes that this should, however, in no way subvert the new government, and the low ranking may just prove to be positive for Tarawneh and his Cabinet. With the past crises, public expectation of government performance has dropped, even minor achievements of the new government will therefore look good, said Fanek. The public's true verdict of the new government will reflect in the traditional follow-up poll conducted by the CSS after a government has been in office for 100 days. Fanek reminds his readers.

Al Dustour's Oreb Rantawi supported continued calls from the public for a stronger separation of powers between the legislative and the executive branches of government. Deputies, using their posts not to serve the interest of the nation, but as a first step towards attaining a ministerial portfolio, and Cabinet members misusing their position as a launching pad for a career in the legislative branch, are facing the severe criticism of the Jordanian people, writes Rantawi. Individualism, due to the lack of an established system of political parties, has led to a weakening of Parliament, with deputies refraining from undertaking critical moves against a government which they hope in future to be a part of. With a true separation of powers this whole concept of "reward and punishment" would be futile, allowing both the executive as well as the legislative to function as they should, the writer claims. Such a move should be supported by all people who desire an enhanced role for the democratically elected legislative body; people who wish to abolish a system of preferentialism in which ministerial posts are all too often distributed on the basis of family or clan relations, said Rantawi.

Economic Review

Dr. Yusuf Mansur

Supply and demand in war on drugs

NO ONE would think that Jordan has a problem with illegal drugs; somehow, drugs were never a concern in Jordan. However, the phenomenon is becoming a source of worry to families and legislators alike. There has been an increase of 51 per cent in drug arrests in 1997 over the previous year in which cases had increased from 326 in 1996 to 492 in 1997.

The number of people involved in drug cases increased from 606 in 1996 to 803 in 1997. Drug enforcement agencies confiscated 82 kg of heroin and 3 million pills in 1997, which is alarmingly much higher than the 67 kg of heroin and the 260 thousand pills confiscated in 1996.

Whether these numbers give cause to cheer or hiss depends upon the half-full, half-empty glass analogy.

Do the numbers mean that Jordan has become more adept at combating drugs or that there are more cases of drug abuse, or both? In any case, regardless of the direction of growth of the drug problem, the approach to solving it is indeed important. Treating the illegal drug problem as one would view a market and indeed it is a market the supply and demand model becomes readily applicable thanks to the excellent contribution of Alfred Marshall.

In this model supply is described by points on a plane that are defined by price and quantity co-ordinates, where quantity is usually plotted on the horizontal axis and price is on the vertical.

The supply curve that is formed by these points ordinarily points upward and away from the origin, where both axes meet positively sloped, showing a positive relationship between price and quantity.

Factors that would shift the supply curve include technology, cost of resources used in the production process, expectations, government policies such as taxes and subsidies, natural disasters or weather conditions and the number of suppliers. An increase in supply would be caused by a positive change in one of these factors and vice versa. The demand curve, on the other hand, while also defined by price and quantity parameters on the vertical and horizontal axis is negatively sloped, demonstrating one of the few laws of economics that quantity demanded of any product is inversely related to the price of the product.

The demand curve would shift when changes occur in: the tastes of consumers, number of consumers, income of the average consumer, prices of substitutes and complements, government regulations subsidising or taxing or even banning the consumption of a certain product, and expectations. The first to formulate this model was Alfred Marshall who, among his other contributions to economics, was John Maynard Keynes' teacher at Cambridge University at the turn of the century.

Marshall, when asked which of the two curves is the most important responded that they were both equally important. He said they were like a pair of scissors (sorry Edward Scissorhands) they cut the paper simultaneously.

The intersection of both curves determines what is known as the market equilibrium quantity demanded at a certain price equals the quantity supplied at that price. Increasing the restrictions on drug traffic and distribution would, if successful, decrease the supply, which in the paradigm translates into a shift in the supply curve.

This in turn would decrease the quantity in the market, and given that the demand remains the same would cause the price of drugs to rise.

The latter part is consequential because higher prices would invite others to trade in drugs and in time increase the supply of drugs again. The policy of reducing supply was exactly what the Bush administration did by chasing after drug lords at home and abroad: invading Panama to capture its president Noriega was one famous example of this costly and ineffective war on drugs.

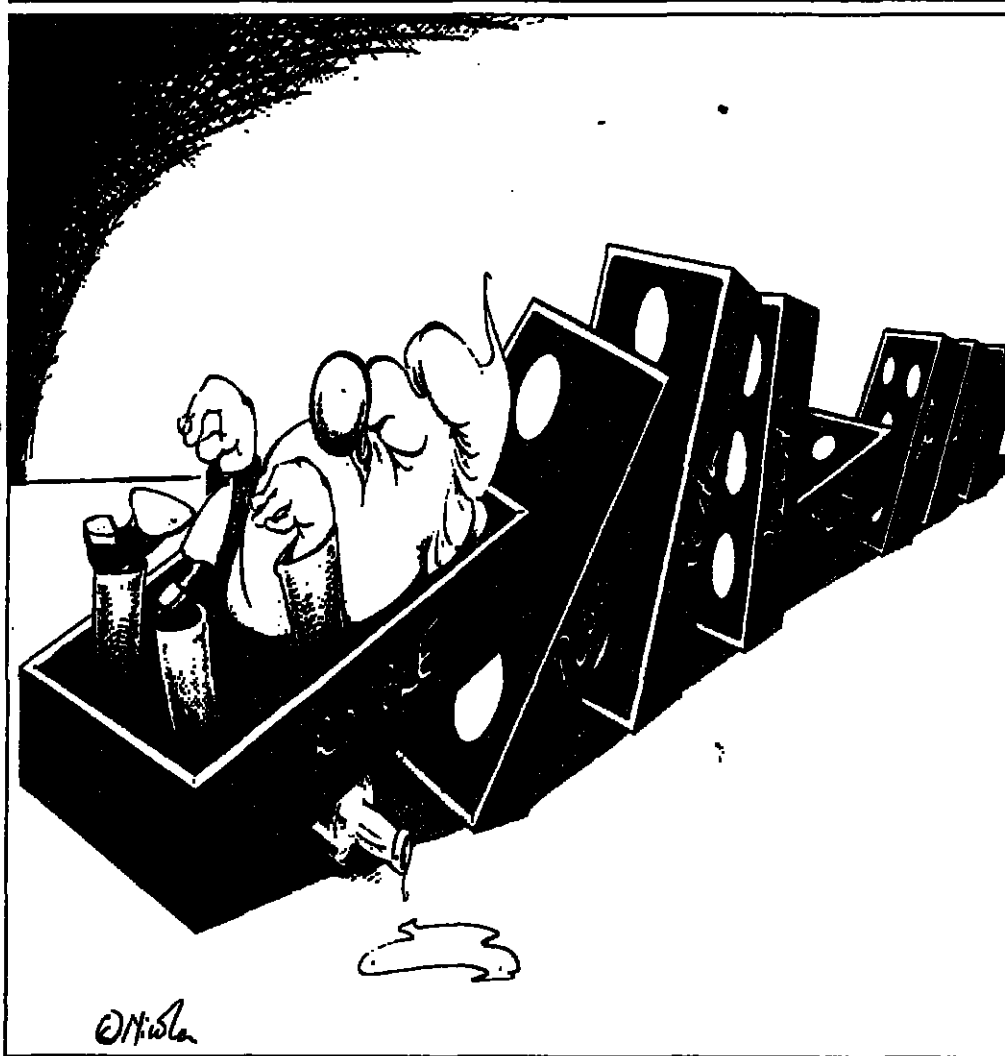
Drug consumption increased as the trade became more profitable and budgetary constraints caused the administration to finally limit its expansion while corruption grew within its own ranks. Reducing demand through well targeted media campaigns and addressing the foundations of drug abuse and addiction would ultimately reduce both the quantity demanded and prices of drugs because people would refuse to consume them.

This of course is the more appropriate policy, given that supply remains illegal and that drug enforcement agencies remain effective. Targeting demand makes the solution more sustainable than the supply reduction approach. Determining outcome through the use of simple economic tools, given the availability of data could shed great insight into many problems.

There is an immense need to study many present policies and implement analytical frameworks.

Alas, the lack of objective studies has derogated dialogue on many pertinent issues to subjective, personalised and many times groundless debates.

It is time for relevant and applied studies in all fields. Let's not wait too long.



Lockerbie: Third country trial

By Robin Cook

THE SAVAGE terrorist attacks two weeks ago against American embassies in East Africa once again focused public attention on the vulnerability of innocent people to murderers who live in the shadows, spreading suffering and misery for unclear political ends. We are at one with the United States in our determination to see justice done. Such callous brutality can never be allowed to go unpunished.

Almost ten years ago Pan Am Flight 103 was brought down over Lockerbie. All 259 passengers and crew on board the flight were killed. Eleven residents of Lockerbie were killed in their homes. The plane was destroyed by a bomb in the cargo hold. It too was an act of premeditated mass murder and of evil terrorism. It is an event still fresh in the memories of the people of Scotland.

The Scottish police were determined to find out how the crime was committed and bring those believed to be responsible to justice. Almost seven years ago, after the biggest criminal investigation in Scottish history, warrants were issued for the arrest of two Libyan nationals, on the charge of murder. Those charges are based on hard evidence, not speculation or political expediency. The British and American governments rightly demanded that Libya hand the accused over for trial in Scotland or the United States.

But Libya has not done so and has ignored the U.N. resolutions which required Libya to do so.

Throughout those long years, the grief of the relatives has been compounded by the knowledge that justice has not been done for their loved ones. It is hard to lay grief to rest in the knowledge that the killers are still free. And what makes it worse is the fact that we cannot share all the facts we know about the case with the relatives. Premature disclosure would jeopardise a fair trial. When I met a group of the families in April, I was struck by their overwhelming feeling

of frustration. When this government took office it was decided to look afresh at the whole issue of Lockerbie. The Lord Advocate, Lord Hardie, reviewed all the evidence with an open mind and decided that it fully justified the pursuit of the warrants against the two accused. Work has been ongoing since then to find a way to make progress.

We have been in stalemate for too long. It helps no-one — not the families, not the people of Libya, not the cause of justice. I have been in constant dialogue with Madeleine Albright, the U.S. secretary of state, to see if we can together break the stalemate. At every stage I have also been in close consultation with the Lord Advocate, who has to take the final decision on whether to proceed with the case.

Throughout the past seven years, Libya has repeatedly stated that it would accept a trial before a court sitting in a country other than Britain or the United States. Their foreign minister said in a letter earlier this year to the president of the Security Council that Libya "accepted the proposal of the League of Arab States that the two suspects...should be tried at The Hague by Scottish judges and in accordance with Scottish law."

For the last few months we have looked at the practical and legal details of setting this up. We have had very detailed discussions with the governments of the United States and the Netherlands. I was very pleased to be able to announce on 24 August, together with the Lord Advocate, and at the same time as Madeleine Albright in Washington, that we now have a detailed and comprehensive agreement on the legal and the administrative steps we need to take.

These have been complex discussions because we have been seeking to create an innovation in international law. For the first time, the ordinary criminal court of one country will sit in another country. It will require a lot of preparation — it will need a U.N. Security Council resolution, we will then need to sign a treaty between

Britain and the Netherlands, and we will need to make domestic legislation in the U.K.

This will be a Scottish court, administering Scottish law, under Scottish procedures and Scottish rules of evidence. It will be presided over by a panel of Scottish judges who, of course, are the only judges qualified to rule on Scots law. If the accused are innocent, they have nothing to fear from Scottish justice. They will get a fair trial. We are ready to accommodate international observers so that the world can see that this is so.

The only difference from a standard Scottish court is that it will not be a trial by jury. It would not be practical or fair to require the attendance of fifteen ordinary citizens for what may be many months of a trial in a foreign country.

These arrangements are the product of long and careful examination by Lord Hardie and his Dutch and American colleagues. They are not for negotiation with any other state. We have taken a significant step so that justice can be done. It is now time for Libya to do the same, delivering the accused for trial in accordance with these arrangements.

Yesterday, Britain and the U.S. asked Kofi Annan, the U.N. secretary general to inform Libya of our proposal. We asked him to arrange for the physical transfer of the two accused to the Netherlands. As soon as they are handed over for trial, we will take action in the Security Council to suspend the international sanctions against Libya.

For years Libya has promised that it would accept a court without jury sitting in a third country. That way forward is now open to them. It is a way forward that will hold out the prospect of lifting the sanctions on Libya and ending the long wait for justice of the relatives of those who were murdered. It is now up to Libya.

The writer is the Foreign Secretary of Great Britain. This article is reprinted from Al Hayat

LETTERS

Transparency and democracy

To the editor:

WHAT A relief for residents in Amman to know that the "water crisis" is over! How do we know this to be the case? It's very simple. According to a recent front page article in the Jordan Times, "Amman's Prosecutor General Mohammad Kharabsheh on Tuesday ordered the media to refrain from publishing news relating to the water crisis case."

Obviously, if there is no news on the water crisis, then it is no longer a crisis. Such a brilliant strategy to overcome a problem which has been plaguing the city for almost two months. Imagine if you will, if other governments had had the foresight to adopt this approach. How many crises could have been avoided?

"President Boris Yeltsin orders the Russian media to cease and desist from publishing any articles relating to current financial problems in the country. As a result, the economy starts to recover as corporations voluntarily pay back taxes and corrupt public officials surrender to authorities."

The suppression of the media as a means of avoiding dealing with unpleasant political and economic situations is not a novel approach. Quite a few governments in recent history have attempted to adopt this strategy. Unfortunately for them, and fortunately for their citizenry, these short-term policies failed to stem public demands for changes within their nations.

William R. Ennenbach
Amman

Advice for Americans

To the editor:

I MUST take issue with the letter of Bala Lemak, obviously a very trusting citizen of the United States. Yes, I am also a citizen, but have learned that in a democracy you MUST ask questions.

The problem with America in the Middle East is not the Arab support of "terrorism," if indeed that support is there, but America's own citizens blindly supporting their government. While some might question some support of Israel, they just don't seem to be able to make the connection between the U.S.' blind support of what is becoming a theocracy, and at the same time, a government that will kill 1.5 million Iraqis in the name of politics. It is the flouting of International Law, which every other country BUT the U.S. is expected to obey, that gets the U.S. into trouble. No law permits the starving out of an entire population the way the U.S. is doing in Iraq. And the bombing — already the U.S. is retracting some of its verbose statements about the Sudanese pharmaceutical plant. Did it get bombed because of its contract to supply medicines to Iraq — a country that both Bush and Clinton say will be under sanctions — a polite word for starving the people until they die? And there are other mostly Third World countries that the U.S. has put "sanctions" on, to different degrees.

The point is, no one hates in a vacuum. Americans should take another look and start to ask, before it is too late, what it is that their country is up to abroad. If they don't like the answers that they receive, then start to act and DO something about it. When America stands for the peace and justice is SAYS it does, then the hate will melt away, and respect will be in its place.

S. Cassidy
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The
Behind

By Dr. Sanjiva W

ALL the international

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Features

Kohl still behind with four weeks to German poll

ELECTION POSTERS trumpet Helmut Kohl as a world statesman. But in four weeks voters look like telling the chancellor, who pushed through German unification after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, that they no longer want him as their leader.

Try as he might by criss-crossing the country in a final whirl of campaign stops, Kohl has failed to close the gap on his Social Democrat (SPD) challenger Gerhard Schroeder.

Kohl dismisses opinion polls which show his Christian Democrats between three and seven points adrift of Schroeder's SPD.

"This election will be decided in the last three weeks," the 68-year-old chancellor said in a newspaper interview Sunday.

But it is virtually impossible to find a pollster who thinks Kohl can convince Germany's 60 million voters to return him for a record fifth term on Sept. 27. For many Germans record unemployment, high taxes, an increasingly unaffordable welfare state and sputtering economic recovery cloud the earlier diplomatic and political achievements of Kohl's 16 years at the helm.

"Around two thirds of voters agree with a Kohl must go mood," said pollster Dieter Roth of Electoral Research Group.

Kohl's centre-right Christian Democratic Union (CDU) has picked up a few points in some surveys in recent months.

"But that is normal given the conservatism of

the Germans," Roth told foreign journalists. "In itself it is not enough to change the current situation."

Kohl has been written off before but by this stage in the 1994 campaign, when the economy was faring worse than now, he had closed the gap on SPD challenger Rudolf Scharping. This time he faces a more popular and telegenic opponent in the 54-year-old Schroeder, whose style and emphasis on the new centre of German politics has brought superficial comparisons with Britain's Tony Blair and U.S. President Bill Clinton.

Schroeder beat out Bonn-insider and SPD Chairman Oskar Lafontaine for the party nomination in March after a resounding election victory in his home state of Lower Saxony. The so-called "Schroeder effect" has helped give the centre-left SPD its first real chance of power since Helmut Schmidt 16 years ago.

But Germany's voting system makes an outright Schroeder victory almost impossible. "Because of the electoral system itself people still vote mainly for parties in Germany," says Roth.

That gives a whole raft of tiny parties ranging from neo-Nazis to reformed communists a potential voice in determining who will steer Europe's economic locomotive into the next millennium.

Schroeder's likeliest government partners are the Alliance 90/Greens, a leftist, ecologist grouping who draw support mainly among the urban young. If the election is close, this Red-



Green alliance might depend upon the tacit support of the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), the heirs of the rulers of the former communist east Germany.

Polls show the PDS could scrape back into the Bundestag (lower house), partly because Kohl is so unpopular in the five eastern states where unemployment is double that in the west.

Kohl's three-party, CDU-led coalition won the 1994 federal election by just 140,000 votes or 0.3 per cent.

A five per cent drop in CDU support in the eastern states this time — a strong possibility according to the polls — would translate into a one percentage point drop nationally.

The closeness of the race has worried not only many within the CDU but also its coalition partners.

The CDU's Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union (CSU), has to face voters in a state election on September 13, two weeks before the national poll.

Some fear the CSU, the arch-conservatives embodied by the late Franz-Josef Strauss, could lose their outright majority in Bavaria for the first time.

The CSU has been furious with the government's third member party, the tiny liberal Free Democrats (FDP), for opening up the whole Kohl succession question.

Some in the FDP have been hinting that Kohl should announce now that he intends to hand over to his more popular number two, Wolf-

gang Schaeuble, if he is re-elected.

The FDP thereby hopes to distance itself from Kohl, who has consistently been less popular than the CDU itself, pollsters say.

Schaeuble added to the succession debate last week by suggesting in an interview that a hand-over midway through a fifth Kohl term was possible.

This unleashed a torrent of media speculation, forcing Kohl to assure voters that if they elected him he would stay the course. "I always said clearly that I am running for a full term of office from 1998 to 2002," the chancellor told Welt am Sonntag newspaper on Sunday.

CDU members of parliament were divided about whether the party had shot itself in the foot four weeks before polling or whether Kohl and Schaeuble had co-ordinated their statements to tell the electorate "vote for Kohl now but you'll get the party's new guard in two years." Whatever the motivation, the result is confusion for many.

"Kohl attacks his rival Gerhard Schroeder by saying that when you vote for Schroeder you don't know what you are voting for," said Suddeutsche Zeitung commentator Herbert Prantl.

"But it's worse with Kohl. When you vote for Kohl you don't even know who you're voting for," he said.

Pollster Roth said the succession debate had probably not damaged the CDU too badly. But the whole discussion, he added, "is a sign that the CDU thinks it could well lose this election."



The Russian smoker appears not to have taken the health warnings too seriously (AFP photo)

The tobacco myth: Behind the smokescreen

By Dr. Sanjiva Wijesinha

Smoking has long been proved to be a health risk. But the tobacco industry has sought to mislead the public and many people are still unsure of the facts.

WITH ALL the information available today — from books, magazines, newspapers, television and the Internet — I am still surprised when supposedly intelligent and educated people I meet all over the world still say: "But it hasn't yet been proved definitely that smoking causes cancer, has it?"

The sad fact is that scientists in the tobacco business have known for more than 40 years that smoking causes cancer, but the industry has denied publicly that such a link exists because they have been making such a killing from cigarette sales.

Details of the marked difference between what the tobacco industry knew about its products and what it actually told the public were revealed recently. A report by the anti-smoking organisation ASH shows that, since the sixties, cigarette manufacturers knew tobacco was an addictive drug and that its crucial attraction was its addictive nature.

The report is the first detailed analysis of documents obtained through litigation and other sources in the United States.

"This report will be of great value to lawyers and victims of tobacco-related disease who are contemplating legal action against the cigarette companies," says Clive Bates, director of ASH. "It gives a brilliant insight into what was going on inside the companies and shows that the industry's public statements have been at sharp variance with its private knowledge and behaviour."

The documents studied by ASH show that the tobacco industry targeted young people especially, recognising that they represented a lucrative market for the future.

For instance, R.J. Reynolds, one of the U.S. tobacco giants, refers to teenagers in its 1975 marketing plan as "tomorrow's cigarette business."

In 1973, the assistant chief of research and development at Reynolds wrote: "The fragile developing self-image of the young person needs all the support and enhancement it can get... This self-image enhancement effect has traditionally been a strong promotional theme for cigarette brands and should continue to be emphasised."

A report of a U.S. study tour by scientists from the company British American Tobacco in 1958, which included visits to companies such as American Tobacco, Philip Morris and Liggett as well as several research institutions, said: "With one exception, the individuals with

whom we met believed that smoking causes lung cancer."

A review carried out a few years later by the consulting firm Arthur D. Little, working for Liggett, reviewed the results of seven years of research.

Their report stated: "There are biologically active materials present in cigarette smoking. These are (a) cancer causing, (b) cancer promoting, (c) poisonous, (d) stimulating, pleasurable and flavourful."

Another memo, from a Brown and Williamson lawyer, observed: "Nicotine is addictive. We are then in the business of selling an addictive drug."

A 1979 document of the Tobacco Advisory Council said: "The effect of switching to low-tar cigarettes may be to increase, not decrease, the risks of smoking."

The ASH report comes in the wake of a landmark settlement in the U.S. last year, in which tobacco companies agreed to pay \$368.5 billion over 25 years, mostly to fund anti-smoking campaigns and public health efforts in that country.

Under that agreement, the firms had to admit publicly that cigarettes are addictive and cause cancer, heart disease and lung-related illnesses. They also had to pay \$4 billion each year into a fund compensating smokers who were successful in lawsuits.

Billboard advertising, as well as the use of human and cartoon images for promoting cigarettes — such as Marlboro Man and Joe Camel — are to be banned under the agreement. Cigarette packets are to carry stronger health warnings, and people will be able to get free medical assistance to stop smoking.

A significant part of the agreement was the U.S. tobacco industry committed itself to paying larger fines if the smoking rates among young people were not reduced by 30 per cent in five years and by 60 per cent in 10 years.

Unfortunately, this reduction in smoking rates among young people only applies to the U.S., so there is nothing to prevent the U.S. tobacco industry from continuing to promote smoking among youngsters in the Third World.

And they will probably continue to be successful as long as there are people who continue to believe that "it hasn't yet been proved definitely that smoking causes cancer, has it?"

Dr. Sanjiva Wijesinha has worked as a medical practitioner in Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, Britain and Australia. He writes regularly for Gemini News Service on health issues.

A week that shook the world

It was Yeltsin's gamble but everyone lost. Now the Russian economy is in freefall and no one knows what to do

By James Meek

IT WAS the week when Russia's financial and political systems locked solid. They simply ceased to work. As might have been expected of systems rammed through by tank-fire, Russia's free market economy and constitution turned out to be rule books for a game that never was.

President Yeltsin took a desperate gamble in bringing back Viktor Chernomyrdin, the prime minister who had been sacked only five months before, in the hope that it might soothe markets in crisis after the previous week's devaluation and debt default. It backfired completely and only accelerated the rouble's fall.

The stock market has shrunk away almost to nothing, and foreign lenders, disgusted by the meagre terms of compensation for Russia defaulting on its bonds, are gone for a long time.

Bit by bit the scaffolding holding up the economy fell away, and it collapsed. As banks tried to save themselves, depositors could not withdraw their savings. Branches closed. Panic-stricken hoarders tried to change roubles stashed under mattresses for hard currency, but the exchange booths had none to offer. Shops, uncertain what to charge, began to shut. Businesses stopped paying suppliers and tax. Those who could continued to siphon hard currency abroad.

Soon salaries and pensions will need to rise to cope with increased prices, but where will the money come from if the government is receiving no income? How will vital imports be paid for?

Mr. Yeltsin made it clear he would not run for president again, and the last page in the first chapter of Russia's post-Soviet history, the Yeltsin Years, was being turned.

At the same time, rather less coverage was being given to an unusually poignant murder. Anatoly Levin-Utkin, the deputy editor of a small investigative newspaper in St. Petersburg, died in hospital after being savagely beaten by unknown attackers near his home.

Levin-Utkin's newspaper had only put out two issues, but had managed to offend Russia's customs service, the head of the former KGB, Vladimir Putin, and one of the country's biggest banks, Bank Rossiyskiy Credit, with accusations of corruption.

Another journalist murdered; another

brick in the wall between the public and the commercial secrets of the rich and powerful. As Russia experienced financial and political derailment, it was a reminder of the origins and nature of the Russian elite who are trying to get the country back on the rails.

Despite the lengthening queues as a futile run on the banks got under way, despite price increases which by the end of the week began to nudge 50 per cent, the masses remained docile. Yet the endless trickle of deaths as a result of murder and incompetence by the pillars of the Russian regime goes on.

The financial tycoons who rose to power in the early 1990s did so against a fratricidal background of stairwell assassinations and car bombs. Mr. Yeltsin, Mr. Chernomyrdin and their underlings have reduced the military to such a state that last month 165 servicemen were killed in accidents, a figure similar to monthly losses in the war with Chechnia.

Is this ruling group really capable of returning Russia to some kind of economic sanity? The world had better hope so but time is running out. And so far, as shown by the twin struggles being waged in Moscow last week — the struggle for political power and the struggle for financial survival — the bad old ways of self-interest were prevailing.

Andrei Piontkowsky, one of Moscow's most pessimistic political commentators, whose moral analysis of Russia's economic woes has consistently been proven accurate down the years, wrote: "The most fundamental reason for the Russian predicament is simply the absence of a political elite in the true sense of this word. All the Russian political class — the presidential family, the prime minister, conservatives, liberal economists, red directors and oligarchs — have been indulging in a carnal orgy of self-enrichment at the expense of the state budget and state property without any remorse or excuses."

Meanwhile, Henrik Kasparian, a grocer, was busy changing the old price stickers on his imported meats, cheeses and yoghurts. "If you've got dollars in your hands, better go home, go to bed, and just watch them get more valuable," he said.

It was a heady time for Moscow's left-patriotic opposition and its communist leader, Gennady Zyuganov, though

he had the grace not to relish his moments of personal triumph in the midst of the country's disaster.

From a figure soundly beaten by Mr. Yeltsin in 1996 elections, a man alternately dreaded, despised and ridiculed by the media and seemingly incapable of mobilising the angry dispossessed to resistance, the communist became a kingmaker overnight. As Mr. Yeltsin's absence from the political scene went on, as the president's weakness and inability to comprehend (let alone cope with) the crisis became clear, Mr. Zyuganov gained stature out of all proportion to his power.

The crowning moment came yesterday when the U.S. ambassador, James Collins, came calling, as if to say that the communist leader's point of view was crucial in setting the agenda for President Bill Clinton's visit next week.

But the left-patriots, who are just short of a majority in the state Duma and whose support is essential if Mr. Chernomyrdin is to have his prime ministerial candidacy approved, are determined to extract the maximum political advantage from the president's weakness. Getting some kind of emergency economic policy running is less important to them than getting a legally-binding pledge from the Yeltsin camp to give up some of the vast powers given to him by the 1993 constitution. They are more concerned with turning Russia into something closer to a parliamentary republic.

Parliamentary deputies, and in particular Mr. Zyuganov's allies, take pride in their lack of responsibility for Russia's troubles. More radical left-patriots, such as Sergei Baburin, still look forward to a neo-Soviet revival. "We want to see a new generation of old Russians come to power," he said yesterday.

But by dragging out the process of confirming Mr. Chernomyrdin, they are increasing their share of blame for the consequences of Russia's current emergency. Parliament is not seen by the electorate as its defender; indeed, with the perks and privileges MPs receive, they are seen as simply feeding at the same trough as the Kremlin and the government.

The Duma was still working yesterday with parliamentarians from the upper house and government experts on an economic crisis package. An early draft obtained by The Guardian is an

anodyne, unconvincing document, heavily dependent on non-existent enforcement mechanisms, exhortation and honesty on the part of low-level bureaucrats. It is certainly far from the scare reports of a return to the command economy and unbridled printing of money, but it is not enough to stop the crisis.

The businessmen who played such a large role in bringing Russia down seem as paralysed as any other section of the elite. The most woeful figure among the so-called oligarchs, the super-rich who control the country's big banks, its media and its raw materials industries, was Alexander Smolensky. Yesterday his bank, SBS-Agro, was taken into receivership by the central bank.

Mr. Smolensky, who once donated 50kg of gold to sheathe the cupolas of Moscow's newly-built Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, vastly expanded his banking empire last year when he acquired a state-owned network of agricultural savings banks in a deal which critics said epitomised Russia's "crony capitalism." He also acquired 25 million small savers, who now have no idea when they will get their money back.

Speaking before the central bank stepped in yesterday, Mr. Smolensky was already a man in shock. "I don't know what will happen next," he said. "I don't know whether they'll print money or not. I don't know how the people will react. I don't know how much the dollar will be worth. I don't know how long the exchange will be closed."

It is hard to see which individual will cut through the deadlock and take action. Some of the most vivid leaders on Russia's political stage, such as Moscow's mayor, Yuri Luzhkov, and the governor of Krasnoyarsk, Alexander Lebed, shied away from putting themselves forward as saviours, or even from calling for early presidential elections. Like many, they cannot see the bottom of the abyss.

"I get the impression that the executive and the legislature are trying to sweep each other away," said Gen. Lebed. "But if they fail to understand the situation in the country, both of them will be swept away."

— The Guardian

For the brain, the present lasts for exactly three seconds

By Nikolaus Dominik
Deutsche Presse-Agentur

MUNICH — Does the present actually exist? This question has been asked by philosophers for centuries and has been answered in many different ways. Neural researchers now believe they know enough to state that the present lasts for about three seconds.

Professor Ernst Poeppel of Munich University, a leading expert on the brain, has collected a mass of evidence for the claim. He has been able to prove in tests that eye movements while driving and observing new objects change every three seconds.

The same, he says, is true of the natural pauses in spoken sentences: poetry in all languages also follows a three-second rhythm and motifs in music are arranged on the time pattern, too.

The brain needs these three seconds

to convert information into knowledge and awareness. And the brain cells have their own, periodic method of restraining the chaos of perception, explains Poeppel.

The brain apparently produces "time-dead zones" which each last for about 30 thousandths of a second. In this time the incoming information is transmitted between the nerve cells and gives rise to the events being identification.

This information processing, by which one nerve cell activates 10,000 other cells, is called neural oscillation, and is the basis of consciousness.

According to Poeppel, the brain has two temporal levels of operation: elementary incidents are defined in the zones of 30 thousandths of a second, and our present is created, that is consciousness is formed, in the three-second period.

This three-second window of the pre-

sent is also responsible for creating our short-term memory and controlling bodily movements. Poeppel illustrates this with two examples: when two people shake hands for longer than three seconds, they intuitively withdraw.

And in tennis, the exact coordination of the arm movement to return the ball has a three-second build-up. The brain opens its sensory gates in this rhythm and adds new information to behavioural patterns — Poeppel here talks of the brain being constantly updated.

Poeppel believes that basic research into the brain is a priority for scientific investigation as the subject covers so many fields. In this it belongs on a par with research into human genes.

Once researchers learn more of how nerve cells are linked to each other, he said, it will provide as yet unimaginable possibilities for the treatment of disorders. Researchers in Munich and

Zurich have already been able to find molecules which control the growth of nerve cells and repair damaged cells.

In experiments with animals, the technique was used to treat lameness so that the animals were again able to control and move the damaged limbs. The nerves which had been severed had grown together again with the help of proteins.

Whether this mechanism could work for humans, too, is not known, says Poeppel. The previous conception of the brain as merely a "machine reacting to stimuli" has been disproved.

Using its own clock, the brain can create its own systems and is constantly aware of itself, says Poeppel. This, for example, means that the eyes supply only 10 per cent of the information to the brain — most information is provided by the brain itself.

World economic growth seen slowing, but recession fears premature

PARIS (AFP) — The Russian and Asian crises have dealt blows to the world economy that will slow growth generally, but it is too soon to predict things snowballing into a global recession, analysts say.

World economic growth this year will almost certainly be less than hitherto forecast, however.

International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Michel Camdessus said on Aug. 13, before the Russian crisis broke, that in light of recent events "it would seem good to me if this year we are not too far below (world economic growth of) three per cent," compared with an April prediction of 3.1.

"There is clearly a systemic risk today," said Christian de Boissieu, economics professor at the University of Paris, Sorbonne, and while "it is a bit

too early to talk about world deflation," growth in the European Union and the United States is likely to slow down.

In France, for instance, "we have already passed the peak of the recovery," he warned.

Paul Atkinson, head of country studies at the Paris-based Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), said, however, that despite the Russian events and the fact that the Asian crisis had turned out to be worse than initially thought, the U.S. and European economies remain strong.

"It is like a holidaymaker on a tropical island: there is a storm coming over the ocean and you can even see the water rising a bit," but it has not yet reached you, he said.

But "so far ... there is not really anything monetary

policy should not be able to cope with in this environment," and both the European Union and the U.S. economy should be relatively unaffected.

Japan, however, "remains a large uncertainty in terms of what is going on in the world economy" and needs to push ahead with economic reforms, Atkinson said.

One thing the latest crisis has highlighted is that the "globalisation" of the economy through a combination of trade liberalisation and new technology has both increased foreign investment flows into new markets and accelerated outside reaction to events.

"What globalisation has meant is that as information makes its way around the world at lightning speed, errors ... are magnified," and mistakes are "punished quickly and often very

painfully," said WTO spokesman Keith Rockwell.

"Since 1995 ... crises are more and more global ... because investors consider each country not as a single country but as a compartment" in their portfolio, so if one emerging market looks risky, they will pull out of them all, said Gerard Maarek, economist at Credit Agricole.

But countries must resist the temptation to try to protect themselves by putting up new barriers to trade and investment, because that would "lead to the worst possible situation," WTO Director General Renato Ruggiero said.

The crisis which exploded in Russia in the past week may have had much of its cause in domestic problems, but it is also the result of global economic events. When the Asian crisis

erupted, analysts were hopeful it could be contained in the region.

But its effects nonetheless spilled over, not least in a sapping of investor confidence in anything but what they saw as solid "safe havens" for their money such as U.S. and European stocks and bonds.

As a result, emerging markets in Latin America also came under pressure and already wavering confidence in Russia weakened further.

The devaluation of the rouble earlier this month in turn increased pressure on Latin American markets.

There is now concern that the Russian situation will feed back into renewed panic selling in Asia, sparking off a new round of currency turmoil in the region which would then bounce back into other areas, analysts say.

The complex interactions at play are well illustrated by the situation in the oil market.

Oil prices have fallen by more than a third in the past year, as demand has been trimmed by the economic slowdown in Asia, which in turn has sapped export mar-

kets for other countries.

Heavily oil-dependent economies such as Russia or Venezuela then face a massive drop in oil revenue, leaving them with a difficult choice between pumping more oil in the hope of compensating through increased volume,

or a cut in output to try to push prices up by limiting supply.

Neither has worked this year, as repeated pledges to cut output by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries have been overtaken by an even steeper drop in demand.

REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.7570	0.9952	1.4409	141.70	1.6620	1736.30	1.9627	5.8905	
DE Mark	0.6882	1.0000	0.6325	63.56	0.8888	937.84	1.1287	3.3621	
GB Sterling	1.6602	2.9625	1.0000	166.37	1.6363	163.63	3.3313	9.8972	
CH Franc	0.6840	1.2190	0.4128	100.00	0.8333	1204.89	137.55	4.0867	
JP Yen	0.0071	1.2391	0.4198	1.0161	1.0161	12.24	135.82	4.1541	
CA Dollar	0.6402	1.1323	0.3635	0.9304	1.10	1118.22	1.2781	3.7967	
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0117	0.3426	0.0830	1226.64	0.8994	1.142	3.3918	
NL Guilder	0.6044	0.8855	0.2999	72.84	0.7872	875.06		2.9657	
FR Franc	0.1698	0.2982	0.1010	24.4673	24.04	0.2651	33.65	33.6500	

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar	1.0000	0.7090	3.7560	0.3770	3.5856	0.3056	3.6728	1615.00	3.4010
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	1.0000	5.2962	0.5317	5.1319	5.1803	2142.45	4.7969	
Saudi Riyal	0.2663	0.1688	1.0000	0.97	0.97	0.97	4.0453	0.9087	
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.9807	9.9605	1.0000	9.96	9.96	4.0228	9.0215	
Qatar Dinar	0.2748	0.1949	1.0320	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	4.0453	0.9347	
Kuwait Dinar	3.2718	2.3197	12.2857	1.2334	11.90	12.02	4.9699	9.0240	
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1930	1.0224	1.0026	0.9907	0.9832	4.0453	0.9347	
Lebanese/1000	0.66	0.4668	2.4720	0.2482	2.3953	0.2012	2.4179		2.2390
Egyptian	0.2940	0.2085	1.1041	0.1108	1.0698	0.0899	1.0789	446.63	

Energy									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY				
Oil	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00				
Brant	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00				
W. Texas	13.50	13.31	13.31	13.31	13.31				
Bonny	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00				
Dubai	12.09	12.53	12.53	12.53	12.53				
UL Gas	130.00	130.00	130.00	130.00	130.00				

Mid-East Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY				
SA Riyal	0.2663	0.1688	0.1585	0.3838	37.7829				
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.47881	0.16205	0.39245	38.6085				
KW Dinar	3.2718	5.76043	1.94742	4.71698	454.037				
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.652	1.57878	3.82409	378.081				
CY Pound	1.9314	3.3935	1.1492	2.783	273.679				

Metal Prices									
Metal	Bid	Offer							
Gold (oz's)	273.75	274.25							
Silver (oz's)	4.66	4.69							
Platinum (oz's)	353.7	355.7							
AL (3 Months)	1388	1388							
CU (3 Months)	1607	1612							
Zinc (3 Months)	1028	1031							
Lead (3 Months)	539	542							
NI (3 Months)	4160	4180							

Main Equity Indices									
Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pr Clr		
New York	DOW JONES	8051.58	-114.31	-1.4	8244.52	8011.52	8165.99		
New York	S&P 500	1027.25	-15.34	-1.47	1051.18	1021.04	1042.59		
London	FT-SE 100	5249.4	-119.1	-2.22	5371	5108.7	5368.5		
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	13916.63	-498.16	-3.46	14289.2	13792.3	14413.9		
Paris	CAC 40	3708.37	-38.57	-0.98	3777.81	3684.28	3748.84		
Frankfurt	DAX	4993.54	-67.3	-1.33	5017.38	4782.4	5060.84		

Energy									
Commodity	Last	Delivery							
Coffee (c/lbs)	116.08	Spot							
Cocoa (\$/ton)	2007	Spot							
Sugar (\$/ton)	234	Spot							
Wheat (\$/ton)	99.3	Spot							
Soy (\$/cbs)	23.89	Spot							
Tea (\$/kg)	125	Spot							
Barley (\$/bsh)	0	Spot							
Rice (\$/ton)	415	Spot							

JOD Cross Rates									
Currency	Buy	Sell							
US Dollar	0.708	0.710							
GB Sterling	1.1885	1.1944							
DE Mark	0.4022	0.4042							
CH Franc	0.491	0.4938							
FR Franc	0.12	0.1206							
JP Yen	0.4988	0.5013							
NL Guilder	0.3564	0.3582							
IT Lira	0.4067	0.4087							

Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

Saudi riyal will not be devalued — central bank

RIYADH (AFP) — Saudi Arabia's central bank has ruled out a devaluation of the kingdom's currency and has said the bank retains a firm grip on the riyal's movement, a local daily said Sunday.

The Al Iqtisadiya daily quoted a Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (SAMA) official as saying that rumours that the riyal would be devalued were unfounded.

The official, who requested anonymity, added that the bank would retain a firm grip on the currency, which is pegged to the U.S. dollar, and would resist all financial speculation.

He said the riyal had been subject to speculation since 1993 but had been able to

intervene to avoid large fluctuations.

Meanwhile, currency traders said it is highly likely that SAMA will continue to intervene to maintain the riyal's stability as long as the speculation lasts.

The riyal, which generally trades within a very narrow margin, has seen small fluctuations over the last week as speculators sold riyals on the strength of a rumour that the currency would shortly be devalued.

The rumour was fuelled by a drop in the kingdom's oil revenues as crude prices plummeted to their lowest level for years as a result of weak demand in Asia and a glut in

global crude stocks.

Although the riyal's fluctuations never strayed more than half a percentage point away from its normal dollar trading values, this was magnified by the currency's supposedly ultra stable status.

"The riyal is prone to rumours of devaluation every 18 months or so. It's a perennial problem and this time it was sparked by fears that low oil revenues would tighten liquidity in the kingdom and that the terrorist strikes on U.S. embassies in East Africa might adversely affect the kingdom," said one Dubai-based currency trader.

But the trader ruled out any real possibility of a devaluation in the riyal in the immediate future.

It would make foreign capital harder to attract and investment proposals would have to be more attractive to overcome the ensuing lack of confidence in the currency, he said.

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THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

ACROSS

- of the "Urbanville"
- Gerb for
- Waterproofs
- Baseball's
- Designer
- Casein
- God of Islam
- Picnic dessert
- Musical
- exercise piece
- School themes
- Prune
- Ropes for
- rustlers
- Picnic food
- Weekday abbr.
- Dispatched
- Speak
- bombastically
- Keep on spinning
- Mistle
- Exon rival
- Slanted type: abbr.
- Worn out
- Picnic drink
- End a dispute
- Abandon the
- truth
- Arts and
- Mocks
- Picnic food
- Fred Astaire's
- sister
- de-camp
- of Clevie
- Singer
- Haggard
- Red vegetable
- Majors and
- Grant

DOWN

- Throw in the
- Muse of poetry
- Arrangement
- Isolated vehicle
- Turkey master
- Miss
- (university)
- Hair-care
- product
- In the past
- Back talk
- Building wings

By Diane C. Baldwin
Columbia, MD

11 Inter (among other things)

12 Trimmed like a wedding gown

13 Hen and cow

14 Clinton Attorney General

15 Settle and raise chicks

16 Approximately

17 Former

18 With to Adam

19 Contest participant

20 Short jaunt

21 June Cartier's

22 Johnny

23 Director

24 Drain screen

25 Half: pref.

26 Resting atop

27 Easy book

28 Israeli airline

29 Youngster

48 In (existing): Lat.

49 VU

50 Sierra

51 Actress Dunne

52 Mississippi

53 Little bit

54 Prepare for finals

55 Take the bus

56 Copycat

57 Plummeted

58 Family chart

59 80 & others: Lat.

60 Little bit

61 Draw

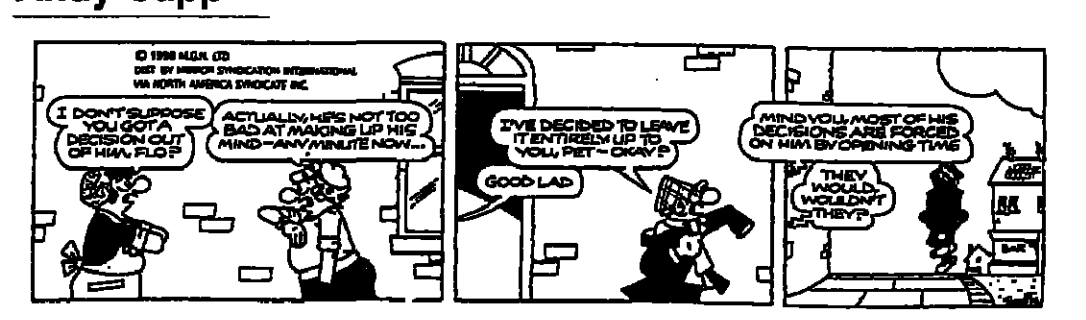
62 Poetic place

63 Converged

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



GIASBERGER



JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

NUNAL

ARCTT

PHEPOR

DORCEP

First I'll contact the architects, then the builders, then...

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer: A

Yesterday's Jumbles: CROON AORTA UNFAIR OVERDO
A new politician needs this to get started—A FOOT IN THE DOOR

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Pharmaceutical producers plan new round of talks with government to raise prices of drugs

THE FEDERATION of Jordanian Pharmaceutical Producers will launch a second round of talks with the Ministry of Health during the coming months to demand raising the prices of drugs by three per cent. According to the federation's president Maher Matalqa, "The Ministry of Health raised prices by a rate that was less than our ambition as prices were fixed since 1989. This is not reasonable after the decline in the dinar's exchange rate."

Matalqa denied that the prices of local and foreign drugs have relatively narrowed and, he claimed, that the credibility of the (local) drugs has also dropped as Jordan is the only Arab country where low-price medicines can be found. He highlighted the importance of supporting the pharmaceutical industry because 75 per cent of the total output is exported earning the Kingdom around \$180 million annually.

Naim Balasme, a Jordanian working in Saudi Arabia, said Jordanian drugs outside the Kingdom are cheaper but indicated that Arabs from Gulf countries come to Jordan because the charges by medical doctors are high. Matalqa denied that drug prices outside Jordan are cheaper and explained that importing countries request sale certificates at the country of origin and based on that an agreement is reached with importers. "This pricing method has resulted in accumulated losses," Matalqa said.

Khalil Ghanem, a pharmacist, pointed out that demand for local drugs has dropped by 80 per cent and, he said that most patients currently prefer foreign medicines over local ones. Around 20 per cent of the patients buy only half of

doctor's prescription due to the high prices of drugs," he added. Ghanem put the responsibility for the low demand on local drugs on the producers because the increase in prices came at a bad economic situation. He expressed his astonishment over raising drug prices haphazardly and stressed that profit in the pharmaceutical sector is good for producers and pharmacies.

Emil Abu Eitah, a general practitioner, described the fixing of prices since 1989 as illogical but he indicated that the new prices were not accompanied by higher prices for foreign drugs except the exchange rate differential. He said the prices of foreign drugs are linked to a basket of currencies and most often the prices decline contrary to the prices of local drugs which if they go up there is no chance that they will decline.

Abu Eitah confirmed that the narrow price range between local and foreign drugs has prompted doctors to prescribe foreign drugs for their patients. He proposed reducing prices by cutting the free promotional materials given to pharmacies noting that such materials are as many as 40 kinds.

Abu Eitah blamed the printed promotional material distributed by Jordanian pharmaceutical companies as poorly designed. "Most often doctors throw such promotional material in the waste basket as soon as the representative of any of the companies leaves," he said. He questioned why foreign companies do not complain of less profit when their marketing expenses are extremely high (Al Ra'i).

Gold price falls to JD5.5 per gramme in Jordan

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Worldwide gold prices have plummeted to a historic low following Russia's move to sell part of its gold reserves on international markets to procure foreign currency for its fledgling economy, a gold dealer said Sunday.

Ghalib Sakijha, chairman of the Gold Traders Association, said Moscow's decision caused an increase in the supply of gold in the world markets, which exceeded demand and caused the decrease in price.

The gold dealer said the Russian government has sold gold worth \$9 billion in the past few days to obtain foreign currency to

buy necessary foodstuffs and other items for its population.

"The Russians found that the easiest way to get foreign currency is to sell some of their gold reserves," Sakijha said. "The psychological situation in Russia could lead to more selling of their gold, which would affect the gold prices badly," he added.

According to last week's figures, one ounce of gold sold at \$274.5 down from former earlier prices which ranged from \$288 to \$296.5 in the past four months, Sakijha said.

The highest price for gold recorded this year was \$313 per ounce, while the average rates for year were to \$288 and \$296, he said.

The dealer estimated that gold lost 30 per cent of its value in 1998.

Sakijha said that following the decline in the international markets, the precious metal slipped to JD5.5 for each gramme in retail gold stores in the Kingdom, down from JD8.25 for each gramme as the average rate of gold in the past 18 months.

Sakijha said current gold prices have slipped even below the cost of gold extraction, which is ranging between \$325 and \$290 depending on the conditions of the gold mines and their proximity to the ground.

"The gold prices have retreated to their lowest level in 20 years. Something should be done to

stop Russia from selling its gold because the move will harm different parties, especially the U.S. and Germany," Sakijha told the Jordan Times.

He was referring to the multi-billion dollar loans the financial institutions in the two countries have extended to Moscow in the past four years to assist its fragile economy.

The gold dealer said the recent decrease in gold prices is the second in less than four months, when Australia and Canada decided to sell some of their gold reserves in the first quarter of this year.

Sakijha said Jordanian gold traders' loss in the past four months are estimated at several hundreds million dinars.

"Around 75 per cent of Jordanian people are hoarding gold either for investment purposes or personal use," he added.

"Each ounce of gold in Jordan has been devalued by \$80 as a result of the continuous slide in prices," said Sakijha.

"The stability of the Russian economy is a matter that concerns the international community, and something should be done to safeguard it from collapse," he added.

"Nobody can predict what is going to happen to gold prices. It depends on political developments in Russia and the reaction of the world community especially the U.S. and Germany," Sakijha said.

Three top Russian banks merge

MOSCOW (AFP) — Three top Russian banks, Onexim, Menatep and Most-Bank, are to merge, ITAR-TASS reported, citing a statement issued by the three banks.

The three banks, rated fourth, seventh and 17th in Russia in terms of assets, announced their merger amid severe concerns that whole swathes of Russia's banking sector could collapse due to the current financial crisis.

The banks plan to form a holding company into which each bank will contribute 51 per cent of its charter capital. The holding company will be headed by Onexim bank chief executive Mikhail Prokhorov.

"The merger will be carried out in line with international standards and will create an institution which will be run in accordance with international standards of accounting and auditing," the statement said, according to ITAR-TASS.

The central bank, which has urged banks to pull together and pool resources to battle the country's financial crisis, hailed the decision as "a factor of stabilisation for the whole Russian banking system." Oneximbank is part of the Interros Financial Group run by billionaire Vladimir Potanin. Menatep is part of businessman Mikhail Khodorkovsky's empire, while Most-Bank is among Vladimir Gusinsky's business interests. All three men are powerful business figures in Russia considered part of the so-called "oligarchy" which wields enormous behind-the-scenes influence.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SUNDAY											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 30/08/1998											
PART 12 MONTHS	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF	NO. OF	VALUE	OPEN	CLOSE	CHANGE		
LISTED	LOW			TRANS.	SHARES	TRADED	PRICE	PRICE			
\$ 355,500	170,000	ARAB BANK	18.4	89	47	1750	395995	230.00	225.00	5.00-	
2,100	1,620	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	13.5	4.22	1	1000	1650	1.66	1.66	-	
3,230	1,090	BANK OF JORDAN	2	0.00	3	3369	3672	1.09	1.09	-	
1,300	870	MID. EAST INV. BK.	65.7	0.00	4	1900	1838	1.00	1.00	-	
2,580	1,950	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	11.1	6.52	1	500	795	1.58	1.58	-	
6,510	2,610	THE HOUSING BK.	19.7	3.22	15	6050	18912	3.15	3.11	0.04+	
3,450	1,790	JOR. KOWATY BANK	8	0.00	2	476	847	1.81	1.78	0.03+	
4,000	1,690	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	18.0	0.00	6	3600	6320	1.74	1.74	0.00	
930	600	PHILADEL. INV. BK.	7	0.00	69	192913	126994	.63	.66	0.03+	
BANK SECTOR TOTALS		INDEX: 296.48	%CHG: -1.83	147	211558	557033					
2,240	1,470	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	9.9	5.43	9	1926	2925	1.52	1.52	-	
4,030	1,650	JORD. ELECTRICITY	14.6	4.24	1	100	236	2.45	2.36	0.09-	
1,250	1,050	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.3	5.38	5	1271	2897	10.8	10.8	0.01+	
1,120	680	REAL ESTATE INV.	13.7	0.00	1	250	175	.71	.70	0.01-	
1,480	1,060	MID. EAST HOTELS	7	0.00	11	66800	74148	1.11	1.11	-	
4,600	1,880	ARAB INFL. INV. EDUC.	10.0	1.99	5	2700	5407	2.01	2.01	-	
1,070	890	KARMA EDUCATION	10.8	0.00	1	650	885	1.89	1.89	0.00	
1,830	1,060	UNITED CO.	4.9	10.00	10	4150	4535	1.07	1.10	0.03+	
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS		INDEX: 110.07	%CHG: +0.03	43	78576	89672					
3,900	1,840	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	11.7	5.58	4	1587	3125	1.97	1.97	-	
6,500	4,530	ARAB POTASH CO.	22.6	4.35	3	550	2330	6.55	6.60	0.05+	
1,250	1,050	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.3	5.38	5	1271	2897	10.8	10.8	0.01+	
1,570	1,000	WOOLLEN INDUSTRIES	11.7	6.80	1	100	105	1.05	1.05	-	
1,710	1,060	INDUSTRIAL COM. AGR.	69.7	0.00	6	1638	1931	1.18	1.18	-	
5,740	2,400	ARAB PHARM. IND.	7.4	2.81	49	19800	53105	2.70	2.67	0.03+	
8,600	1,120	JOR. CERAMIC IND.	5.0	8.77	4	3350	6276	1.16	1.16	0.02-	
1,440	1,020	JOR. PIPES MANUF.	9.2	9.01	3	2700	2997	1.10	1.11	0.01+	
2,250	1,370	GENERAL MINING	7	4.73	3	1500	2220	1.51	1.48	0.03+	
6,350	4,700	DAM ABU AL-RAHMAN	6.9	0.00	1	250	1438	5.75	5.75	-	
570	400	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	13.5	0.00	15	19800	7920	.40	.40	-	
590	320	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	2	2000	620	.32	.31	0.01-	
1,760	760	UNIV. CHEM. IND.	8.2	10.00	1	50	40	.80	.80	-	
4,050	2,700	ALUMINUM CO.	22.7	2.95	1	100	271	2.85	2.71	0.14-	
2,300	710	HAZ. WASTE MGMT. CO.	33.8	0.00	5	21000	14717	.72	.72	-	
730	390	JOR. SULFIDE CHEM.	7.4	0.00	11	9482	3735	.40	.39	0.01-	
1,300	580	UNIV. WOOD. IND.	9.1	10.53	9	6250	3583	.59	.57	0.02-	
1,600	1,200	HAZ. WASTE MGMT. CO.	8.8	8.00	7	12450	15642	1.24	1.25	0.01+	
1,080	600	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	8.5	16.67	5	5250	3170	.62	.60	0.02-	
1,610	1,150	EL - SAY RAY RAY WEAR	42.2	0.00	9	5163	6164	1.18	1.20	0.02+	
1,710	930	SWELL. TOBACCO	6.6	6.71	2	1000	840	.84	.84	-	
890	660	JORDAN STEEL	9.3	8.43	3	3800	3154	.83	.83	-	
720	580	HAZ. ALUMINUM	32.7	0.00	15	9150	6039	.66	.66	-	
670	540	MID. EAST COMPLEX	9.8	0.00	5	2750	1485	.54	.54	-	
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS		INDEX: 85.01	%CHG: +0.40	169	131993	144181					
GRAND TOTAL		INDEX: 180.55	%CHG: -1.19	359	422127	790886					
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 30/08/1998											
BUY	SELL	BUY	SELL	BUY	SELL	BUY	SELL	BUY	SELL	BUY	SELL
800	500	UNION INV.	0.00	14	67250	34298	.51	.51	-		
620	240	ARAB INV. INVEST.	0.00	20	101750	25438	.25	.25	-		
600	290	ARAB FOOD & MED.	0.00	5	4250	1233	.29	.29	-		
430	240	ARAB INV. INV. TRD.	26.5	0.00	3	1850	1850	.23	.23	0.01-	
420	230	HAZ. TEXTILE	0.00	1	500	125	.25	.25	-		
580	300	HAZ. MULT. INV. TRD.	0.00	13	19200	5568	.30	.29	0.01-		
450	180	HAZ. PETRO. CHEM.	0.00	5	4250	1233	.29	.29	-		
1,750	1,050	UNION TOBACCO 87.5%	10.6	7.53	3	1014	1556	1.55	1.55	0.01+	
730	370	HAZ. PETRO.	0.00	9	14030	8138	.58	.58	-		
350	200	IND. ENG.	0.00	4	6000	1235	.21	.20	0.01+		
710	340	IND. CERAMIC	0.00	1	250	18	.17	.16	0.01+		
340	170	I. TEXTILE MANUF.	0.00	1	100	18	.17	.16	0.01+		
950	540	ADVANCED PHARM. IND.	0.00	6	3700	2035	.56	.55	0.01-		
680	430	HAZ. POLYMER	0.00	2	700	336	.50	.48	0.02-		
1,000	690	AL-TEJAN PRINTING CO	10.8	10.67	2	800	562	.70	.71	0.01+	
GRAND TOTAL				87	225554	83056					

* New 12 months low
* Stock dividend during the past 12 months
* Listed during the past 12 months
* P/E ratio is 100 or more
* Negative P/E
* Earnings in zero or N/A for the most recent year

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY, AUGUST 31, 1998

by Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

(March 21 to April 19) Today's a good day for money. This condition will increase as the day goes on while the usual advice is to take action early morning, now just the opposite is true. Hold off your best time to ask for a raise may come when work is done, not before.

(April 20 to May 21) Things will start to change today, rather than falling apart, which is what seems like they've been doing the last few days. This condition is most likely to be in effect by dinner, why not plan a little celebration around then, that you've achieved over the past few days?

(May 22 to June 21) It's time to get your affairs in order. You and your partner or roommates want to buy something nice for your home. You want to pool your resources in order to do this. It's time to work out fine, after you get past the argument about what you can both live with.

(June 22 to July 21) A partner can show where you're missing something important. You've been doing everything you know how to do, and doing it well, but you're overlooking something you didn't know about. That's why there are lots of us on the planet, so we can point these things out to one another.

(July 22 to August 21) If you're looking for a job, get your applications out today. There's an opportunity right now to use your natural abilities more and make a lot more money. This could be the job of your dreams, but you're not going to get it by sitting around and waiting. Get busy.

(August 22 to September 22) Other people's lives and wants will take up most of your day, but you want to have private time tonight. Be particular about what you ask to join you. An old friend would be best, but you don't have to explain everything to them. The "old memories" even as you make new ones.

(September 23 to October 22) A problem at work has you stymied because it required too much money. Well, today you could find a solution. It involves a trade, or fixing something you already have up your idea of how it should be done and done. This could turn out to be fun.

(October 23 to November 21) The sun is in Sagittarius, the moon is in Sagittarius, going into Capricorn. New skill you're acquiring could come in very handy today. You may have never tried it before, but it looks like you'll get the opportunity. Nobody needs to know you're just a novice. If you don't tell them, who will?

(November 22 to December 21) You have the opportunity to make a lot more money, possibly by taking on more responsibility. If you're like most Sagittarius, that's about as appealing as a root canal without anesthesia. But if you've been practicing, accepting the challenge.

(December 22 to January 20) The conclusion of the last few days is clearing, and it looks like you're shining ahead. It's easy now to figure out what needs to be done. You'll run into at least one little problem, but that's what happens, but after all you've been through lately, it'll seem like nothing.

(January 21 to February 19) You've got to be organized today. You may get a friend to help, but that's not someone who's even more casual about your affairs than you are. You want to ask a critically, meticulously, detail-oriented person. In fact, if you can't find him or her to organize you so you can go play, that would be an excellent investment.

(February 20 to March 20) A group meeting will be well today. One of you is going to have a really good idea and inspire the rest. You might even avoid a potential problem by figuring it out ahead of time. The whole group of creativity equals way more than the sum of the parts. You guys are awesome together.

by Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

Industrial exhibition to open next week

AMMAN (Petra) — Around 90 Jordanian companies will take part in the sixth Jordanian Industrial Expo which will be opened Sept. 7 at the Amman International Motor Show.

The exhibition which is organised by the Jordanian Businessmen Association and the Investment Promotion Corporation will last until Sept. 11.

The exhibition is being held on a regular basis since 1993 to acquaint consumers with the Jordanian industry and the advanced level they have reached.

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MIRAM

William Jones Basketball Tournament Jordan hopes to beat Chinese Taipei today

By Samir Janakat in Taiwan
and Aileen Bannayan in Amman

JORDAN'S MEN'S basketball team meet hosts Chinese Taipei today in the first of their matches at the 21st International William Jones Basketball Tournament which opened in Taiwan Sunday with 10 teams taking part.

Jordan will be aiming for a win after Taipei scored an 80-56 (36-24) win over Malaysia in the opening match of the week-long tournament. South Korea beat the UAE 80-65 (47-40) in the other match.

Jordan was drawn in Group 1 alongside Chinese Taipei, UAE, Korea, Malaysia. Group 2 includes Japan, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, the Philippines and Costa Rica.

The top two teams in each group will play in the semifinals while the rest will play for 5th-10th places.

With the tournament regulations stipulating that the host team qualifies to the semifinals, regardless of its

results in the preliminary round, Jordan has to win Group 1 to ensure qualification since taking second place in case Taipei does not take first place will drop Jordan out of contention because Taipei will then qualify with the first placed team.

The Jordanian team was due to play its first match without players from Al Jazireh Club who withdrew from all national team lineups on the eve of the men's team's departure citing "bias against the club's players."

With the Ministry of Culture and Youth trying to bridge the gap and solve the issue between the club and the Jordan Basketball Federation (JBF) it was still unclear whether the four players would join their teammates in Taiwan later on.

With Jazireh's players declining play just before the team left Amman, the JBF named two other players (one from Orthodox and another from Ahli clubs) to the lineup which now includes only ten players.

In preparation for the tournament, the team had a training camp in Athens during which they played six matches winning two and losing the rest.

The JBF also hosted the Iraqi national team winning 93-65 in the first friendly while the second ended in a 79-79 draw after the Iraqis refused to play overtime to determine the winner.

The team includes mainly under-22 players and are joined by veterans Hital Barakat and Yousef Zaghloul, in addition to Nasser Bassam, Faisal Nsour, Fadi Saqqa, Mohammad Shamali, Ayman Du'eis and Ashraf Samara. Jan Sahlieh and Kamal Hilou were recalled to the lineup after Ma'an Odeh, Husam Lutfi and Yousef Abu Bakr, Ala' Bitbeisi of Al Jazireh withdrew.

The Kingdom was placed seventh in the last Asian Basketball Championship which was held in Saudi Arabia last year.



Juventus' ace Alessandro del Piero tries to score during Italian SuperCup match Juventus vs Lazio at the "Delle Alpi" stadium in Turin. Lazio won 2-1 to capture the SuperCup for the first time (AP Photo)

France's Sebastien Grosjean misses bid for finals

BROOKLINE.

Massachusetts (AFP) — Cinderella story of France's Sebastien Grosjean, from unheralded qualifier to potential finalist at the U.S. Professional Tennis Championships, ended Saturday when he succumbed to fourth-seed Michael Chang 7-5, 4-6, 6-3.

Grosjean's fellow Frenchman and semi-finalist Cedric Pioline lost his match to Paul Haarhuis of the Netherlands, a 7-5, 4-6, 6-3 winner and Chang's opponent in Sunday's finals.

Grosjean, a 20-year-old Marseille native who listed 141 at the start of the year in the Association of Tennis Professionals ratings, had been relegated mainly to playing in satellite and qualifying tournaments.

He gained a slot at the U.S. Pro by winning a qualifier round one week ago.

Grosjean gained a two-set victory over John van Lottum in the opening round, followed up with a two-set triumph over Xavier Malisse, and produced a surprising quarter-final 6-4, 7-5 upset of the tournament's top-seeded

Jonas Bjorkman.

In the semi-final, Grosjean battled back from an opening set loss to unleash a pair of service returns in the eighth game to break Chang and held serve to force the match into a third set — the third for Chang and Grosjean's first in the tournament.

The veteran Chang, combining strong groundstrokes with deft volleys at net, broke Grosjean in the eighth game of the final set to gain the victory and the right to face Haarhuis in the final.

Iranian women learning to play football

TEHRAN (AFP) — Two public gymnasiums in Tehran have begun offering courses to teach women how to play football, the state news agency IRNA reported Sunday.

The courses will be reserved exclusively for women, who have been restricted to playing the sport only in all-girl schools.

Since the 1979 Islamic revolution, women in Iran have only been allowed to play those sports in public in which they can remain veiled, such as skiing, shooting, and horseback riding.

Faezeh Hashemi, a member of parliament and daughter of former president Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, pledged in April to begin organising women's football matches "very soon."

Her support of women's football provoked the ire of political conservatives, who believe that the women, playing outdoors in shorts and jerseys, would be exposed to the eyes of men.

A parliamentary commission held a closed-doors session in April to discuss the issue.

National soccer team leaves for training camp in Yugoslavia

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Kingdom's national soccer team left for Yugoslavia Sunday for a three-week training camp in preparation for the Sept. 22-30 Arab Cup finals in Qatar.

According to head of delegation and Jordan Football Association (JFA) secretary Mohammad Hamdan, the team is scheduled to play at least six friendly matches against Yugoslav teams from different divisions.

The team will return to Amman Sept. 19 and fly to Doha for the finals on the same day. Friendly matches against Lebanon, Bahrain, and Oman have thus been cancelled.

Jordan qualified to the Arab Cup finals after beating Lebanon 2-0, drawing 1-1 with Palestine, and losing to Syria 3-0 in the preliminaries held in Beirut, Lebanon.

Twelve teams will be contesting the finals in which Jordan will be playing alongside Libya and Qatar in Group 1. Group 2 includes titleholders Egypt, Kuwait and Syria. Morocco, the UAE and Sudan will be playing in Group 3 while Group 4 includes Saudi Arabia, Algeria and Lebanon.

The top team in each group will

qualify to the second round where the winners advance to the finals and the losers play for third and fourth places.

Jordan meets Libya Sept. 24 and Qatar Sept. 26.

Meanwhile, Premier League matches have been put on hold pending the return of the national team with two more weeks remaining for the conclusion of the first leg.

Al Faisali currently top the standings on goal difference after the a 6-0 demolition of Kufroun while Al Wihdat lost the lead after suffering their first defeat of the event 3-0 to Al Hussein.

Al Wihdat are this year looking for their 5th consecutive Premier League title. They won the first of the season's titles when they clinched their fourth Cup Winners' Cup.

Al Faisali won the second of the season's four soccer championships when they won their record 10th Jordan Cup.

Al Faisali's last major titles were the 1995 Jordan Cup and the 1997 Federation Shield, as Al Wihdat have won the Cup and Cup Winners' Cup in the last two years and the Premier League in the last four.

The fourth trophy of the year — the Jordan Football Association

Shield — will be played without national team players starting today (see separate story on page 11).

The Premier League Championship kicked off in April but has witnessed a series of delays starting with the month-long boycott of seven teams over the issue of ticket sales allocation before the JFA settled the dispute.

The championship then resumed only to halt again in June during which the national team prepared for the Arab Cup qualifiers. It then resumed Aug. 9 before its current halt for the Arab Cup finals.

The national team includes Ahmad Abu Nasouh, Mohammad Abu Daoud, Freidon Shamsudin, Mohammad Mahadin, Haitham Shboul, Faisal Ibrahim, Abdallah Abu Zame'h, Amjad Taher, Haitham Samrin, Ra'fat Ali, Subhi Suleiman, Hatem Aql, Osama Talal, Ali Juma'a, Abdullah Shiyab, Farid Shananeh, Laith Dardour, Badran Shaqran, Hassounah Shiekh, Sufyan Abdullah, and Ihab Ma'ali.

Three key players are missing from the lineup: Jiryes Tados (injury), Jamal Abu Abed (retired), and Yousef Ammouri who was not named to the team.

Graf captures 1st title in more than a year

NEW HAVEN (AFP) — Steffi Graf won her first tournament since May 1997 and the 104th title of her career Saturday, defeating Jana Novotna 6-4, 6-1 in the Pilot Pen International.

The victory marked the first major stepping stone of the German's comeback from injury.

She was out of the game from June of last year after undergoing knee surgery, returning briefly for two tournaments in February. But it was not until June that she was able to compete regularly once again.

Struggling to make her mark, she lost to Magui Serna in the third round of the Canadian Open last week, and instead of taking a vacation in Florida as she intended, Graf heeded the advice of her coach, Heinz Gunthardt, to play in New Haven.

A weary Novotna played a large part in Graf's victory, failing to compete at all in the second set after being broken to love to concede the first.

But the fourth-seeded German deserved her triumph on the basis of her first set performance alone.

"I was very tired from playing night matches and a lot of tennis this week," said Novotna, who played doubles until after 10pm the night before the final. "With her you have to be 100 per cent sharp, and Steffi was on top of her game."

"The way she played today, I think she is just where she was when she stopped playing. Now the point will be if she can do it from one week to another, how long she can keep it up."

There were virtually no flaws in Graf's game. She moved like a well-oiled machine and struck both her forehand and backhand with precision. Second seeded Novotna matched her in most areas, and made many well-timed approaches to the net, but once she had dropped the first set her challenge fell away dramatically.



Steffi Graf of Germany holds up the U.S.T.A. Hardcourt Championship trophy after she won the Pilot Pen International singles championship in New Haven, Conn. Graf won the title by defeating Jana Novotna 6-4, 6-1 (AP Photo)

Graf broke to lead the first set 3-1. Novotna broke for 2-3 and Graf re-established her lead in the next game to go ahead 4-2. But serving at 5-3, she was beaten by a forehand pass as Novotna earned a reprieve.

Graf's response to that was to break Novotna to love for the set, and the Czech claimed only two points in the first three games of the second set

before asking for a toilet break. It made no difference. She returned as lethargic as before and claimed only nine points in the set as Graf stroled to victory.

"I felt good out there. To win was very, very satisfying. This is what I have worked for. Going into the Open, if I don't get confidence from winning this tournament I don't know where I'd get it from," said

Graf, who beat the number two and three ranked players. Her own ranking will go back into the top 30 as a result of her triumph.

"I picked the right moments to come to the net, and especially in the first set when she played a little shorter I attacked on the important points. That is one thing I definitely have to keep working on because it puts a lot of pressure on the opponent."

Flu bug hits Aussie swimmers before Commonwealth Games

SYDNEY (AFP) — An influenza scare has hit the Australian swimming team in the leadup to next month's Kuala Lumpur Commonwealth Games.

Defending 100m breaststroke champion Phil Rogers has been isolated from the rest of the 41-member Australian team at a training camp in Singapore because of illness.

"He's been isolated from the rest of the squad so he won't infect the

other kids," team media manager Ian Hanson said from Singapore Sunday.

"He's back in the water but he's just a bit frustrated he's not feeling 100 per cent."

Rogers is the oldest member in the Australian team at 27, but is still ranked number one in the Commonwealth in the 100m ahead of compatriots Ryan Mitchell and Simon Cowley.

Hanson said dual Olympic gold

medallist Kieren Perkins had resumed training after coming down with the 'flu earlier this month, adding Perkins had time to recover since the 1500m freestyle was on the last day of the Games swimming program on September 17.

The Games opening ceremony is on September 11.

TODAY AT	PHILADELPHIA '1'	PHILADELPHIA '2'	PLAZA	CONCORD	GALLERIA 1	GALLERIA 2	Highway Theatre
	Robert Duvall & Tea Leoni...in DEEP IMPACT Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Leonardo Di Caprio...in THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Comedian Adel Imam...in AL ZA'EEM Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30 Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30	CONCORD '1' Robert Duvall & Tea Leoni...in DEEP IMPACT Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD '2' UP CLOSE & PERSONAL Shows: 3:30, 5:30 only	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria GODZILLA Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria CITY OF ANGELS Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30 Adel Imam...in AL ZA'EEM at 10:30 p.m.	WATCH OUT FOR THE NEW PLAY

Jordan Football Association Shield kicks off today

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

JFA Shield record (runner-up in parenthesis)

AMMAN — Al Wihdat play Al Qadissieh while Al Ramtha meet Kufirsoum Monday in the opening matches of the 1998 Jordan Football Federation (JFA) Shield Championship — the fourth of the Kingdom's annual soccer competitions.

The month-long event groups Premier League teams only playing without their national team players for the first time in the competition's history.

The national team left for Yugoslavia Sunday for a three-week training camp in preparation for the Sept. 22-30 Arab Cup finals in Qatar (see separate story on page 10).

The JFA Shield is the last major soccer event of the season. Al Wihdat, looking for their 5th consecutive Premier League title, won the first of the season's titles when they clinched their fourth Cup Winners' Cup.

Al Faisali beat Al Wihdat to win their record 10th Jordan Cup last month. They currently top Premier League stand-

1981	Jazireh (Wihdat)
1982	Wihdat (Amman)
1983	Wihdat (Ramtha)
1984	Amman (Husseini)
1985	Amman (Faisali)
1986	Jazireh (Faisali)
1987	Faisali (Wihdat)
1988	Wihdat (Husseini)
1989	Ramtha (Wihdat)
1990	Ramtha (Husseini)
1991	Faisali (Wihdat)
1992	Faisali (Husseini)
1993	Ramtha (Qadissieh)
1994	Husseini (Faisali)
1995	Wihdat
1996	Ramtha (Husseini)
1997	Faisali (Wihdat)

ings on goal difference over Al Wihdat.

Premier League matches have been put on hold for now pending the return of the national team with two more weeks remaining for the conclusion of the first leg.

Titleholders Al Faisali will be aiming to win a record fifth Shield title. Al Wihdat and Al Ramtha have also won it four times.

Al Faisali's last major titles were the 1995 Jordan Cup and the 1997 Federation Shield. Al Wihdat have won the Cup and Cup Winners Cup in the last two years and the

Premier League in the last four.

Al Wihdat, Al Faisali and Al Ramtha are the three clubs most affected by the absence of national team players while the rest of the clubs have their complete lineups ready for competition.

Jamal Abu Abed, who retired from international duty this year, will be leading Al Faisali, while Al Wihdat will be missing seven players in addition to captain Yousef Ammouri who has been suspended by the JFA for three matches for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Arsenal held as Petit sees red

LONDON (AFP) — Arsenal missed the chance to go top of the English Premiership when they had World Cup hero Emmanuel Petit sent off and were held to a 0-0 draw by top flight newcomers Charlton at Highbury on Saturday.

Aston Villa are the new leaders of the early season table following a 1-0 win at Sheffield Wednesday while stricken Tottenham grabbed a crucial 1-0 victory at struggling Everton.

Liverpool will join Villa at the Premiership summit if they wreck Newcastle coach Ruud Gullit's first game in charge with victory at St. James's Park on Sunday.

French midfielder Petit was booked for dissent in the 56th minute after referee Graham Poll turned down penalty claims by fellow Frenchmen Nicolas Anelka and Patrick Vieira.

A minute later Petit brought down Charlton's Shaun Newton with a reckless challenge and Poll had no option but to send the Frenchman on his way for an early bath.

Petit's petulance forced the Gunners into a reshuffle, effectively ending any hope they had of breaking down their resolute and well-organized London rivals, who led the table before kick-off.

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger made no attempt to excuse Petit's behaviour, admitting: "He let frustration get the better of him".

Petit, who is due to have an operation to clear a sinus problem on Wednesday and has pulled out of France's European Championship qualifier against Iceland next Saturday, will now also miss Arsenal's game at Leicester the following Saturday through a one-match suspension.

In the day's other matches, Kevin Gallacher marked his first start of the season with a goal to open Blackburn's account for the new campaign in a 1-0 home win over Leicester at Ewood Park.

Nottingham Forest striker Jean-Claude Darcheville grabbed his first goal for the club as Southampton slumped to a 2-1 defeat at The Dell — their third loss of the season.

Middlesbrough substitute Hamilton Ricard gave Bryan Robson's side a 1-1 draw against Derby with his first goal of the season after Costa Rican Paulo Wanchope had scored on the half-hour for the visitors.

Leeds drew 1-1 at Wimbledon while Coventry and West Ham battled each other to a goalless stalemate.

Ramtha threaten to pull out of Premier League Championship

By Tareq Ayyoub Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Al Ramtha Club Sunday threatened to withdraw from local football contests if the Jordan Football Association (JFA) fails to ensure fair handling of soccer matches by local referees.

Spokesman Salti Zoubi said a final decision on the issue would be announced in the coming 48 hours if contacts with the JFA failed to bear fruit.

He said that his club was trying to contact JFA Vice President Saleh Irshaidat to discuss the issue with him. Zoubi pointed that Al Ramtha has sent a letter to the JFA President HRH Prince Abdullah urging him to interfere to resolve what he described as the country's "referee problem".

Al Ramtha's spokesman told the Jordan Times that the option of suspending the club's participation was suggested by some members following repeated "mistakes" by Jordanian referees during Premier League matches, notably Al Ramtha's match

with rivals Al Wihdat, which the latter won 1-0.

That match seems to have triggered the latest controversy with Al Ramtha charging that Jordanian referee Fahd Hashim was "responsible" for their team's defeat.

"The referees were responsible for the suspension of our coach Abdul Majeed Samarah," Zoubi added.

Samarah was suspended for one year because of "misbehaviour" with one of the Syrian referees following the match.

Zoubi said that the same mistakes were repeated during their matches with Al Hussein and Al Arabi last month.

"The issue is occurring again and again. Referees commit mistakes and we bear the consequences. If the JFA fails to do anything, we will have no choice but to pullout from the local contests," Zoubi said.

"The JFA should watch the performance of referees. If any mistakes are committed, they should be punished and the penalty should be made public," he added.

The performance of local referees has lately come under severe criticism by soccer clubs in the country complaining of bias in handling matches.

Last year, one of the Kingdom's key soccer teams, Al Faisali, insisted on not playing against Al Wihdat with a panel of Jordanian referees.

The JFA agreed to allow foreign referees to supervise the matches between the two clubs, on the condition that referees be paid by the club that requests such a demand, amounting up to \$3000 for each game.

"We cannot afford to pay that amount to foreign referees to officiate our matches. Local referees should be well qualified to run local contests," he added.

He was referring to the Cup Winner's Cup match against Al Wihdat which was run by Syrian referees, in which his team lost 4-2.

"We are under pressure from the clubs fans and members that if such mistakes are repeated, we should have no other choice but to quit," he added.

Hill snatches Belgian GP as Hakkinen, Schumacher crash out

SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS, Belgium (AFP) — World championship rivals Mika Hakkinen and Michael Schumacher both failed to finish a drama-packed Belgian Grand Prix here on Sunday, allowing Britain's Damon Hill to snatch an extraordinary victory.

His win, however, was totally overshadowed by a string of controversial incidents which included a mass pile-up forcing a restart, a string of spectacular collisions in appalling conditions and only a handful of cars finishing.

Schumacher, who tangled with Hakkinen on the first corner of the restart to put the Finn out of the race, added to the drama when he was himself forced out of the race when looking sure of victory.

The German, furious after smashing into the back of Hakkinen's teammate David Coulthard, marched up to the McLaren pit but was stopped from getting to Coulthard by a crowd of officials.

Had Schumacher won, he would have overtaken Hakkinen in the world

championship race. Instead, he remained on 70 points, seven behind the Finn with three races to go.

Hill, meanwhile, took advantage of the carnage to win ahead of his Jordan Mugen Honda teammate Ralf Schumacher, the younger brother of Michael, with Frenchman Jean Alesi third in a Sauber-Petronas.

The drama began from the off as rain and fog beginning to envelop the circuit and clouds of spray off the track impaired the drivers' vision.

Hakkinen, who began on pole, and Schumacher got away safely but just past the first chicane Coulthard veered across the track after appearing to lose control and rebounded back onto the circuit off the safety barrier.

In all, 13 cars were involved in the resulting pile-up, four of which failed to make the restart, reducing the field to 18.

The excitement continued immediately on the restart almost an hour later after the track had been cleared of oil and debris.

Schumacher and Hakkinen made contact in the first chicane and the Finn spun before being hit by a following car, forcing him to abandon.

Hill, the winner here in 1993 and 1994, took advantage by grabbing the lead but he was caught and passed by Schumacher after eight laps as the rain got heavier.

The race seemed set to turn into a procession as the German, a master in wet conditions and the winner here for the past three years, rapidly forged ahead.

The crashes continued behind, however. Jacques Villeneuve, in his Williams-Mecachrome, spun off after 17 laps before the climax of the race occurred eight laps

later. Schumacher, preparing to lap Coulthard, reacted too late when the Scot appeared to slow down to let him through and smashed into the back of the McLaren.

Schumacher drove his car back to the pits on three wheels, tore off his helmet and set off to try and get to Coulthard, only to be forced back by a crowd of McLaren officials.

Coulthard managed to get back onto the circuit, leaving just seven cars in the race.

By then Hill had taken the lead and the English former world champion got home, finishing the 44 laps for his first victory for the Jordan team and his 22nd Grand Prix win of his career.



Spain's Felix Mantilla returns the ball to Marat Safin of Russia in the semifinals of the Hamlet Cup at the Hamlet Golf and Country Club in Commack, N.Y. Mantilla won 6-3, 5-7, 6-4 (AP Photo)

Rafter ousts Rusedski to reach Hamlet Cup final

COMMACK, New York (AFP) — Pat Rafter tuned up for his U.S. Open title defence with a victory over his 1997 Flushing Meadows final victim Greg Rusedski Saturday to reach the final of the ATP Tour Hamlet Cup.

The second-seeded Rafter broke Rusedski once in each set in recording a 6-4, 7-5 victory that moved the Australian into his third hardcourt final of the summer.

Rafter will face the winner of the second semi-final between Russian teenager Marat Safin and eighth seed Felix Mantilla of Spain.

Rafter, a finalist here last year, broke Rusedski in the 11th game of the second set to go up 6-5 and secured the victory when his volley return was put in the net by Rusedski.

With the victory, Rafter improved to 17-2 in the summer hardcourt season, winning back-to-back Super 9 titles in Toronto and Cincinnati. The 25-year-old Australian will seek his fifth singles title of the year on Sunday, which would tie Chile's Marcelo Rios for the ATP Tour lead.

The fourth-seeded Rusedski fell to 1-5 lifetime against Rafter, failing to capitalize on three break-point opportunities and committing 18 unforced errors. He was attempting to reach his fourth ATP Tour final of the year.

The 18-year-old Safin, playing in his first ATP Tour quarter-final, dispatched lucky loser David Prinosil of Germany in straight sets Friday.

Safin is the youngest player in the top 100 on the ATP rankings at No. 72. He gained attention earlier in the year by dropping an epic five-set battle to Jim Courier in the first round of Davis Cup.

Safin also upset Andre Agassi and 1997 French Open champion Gustavo Kuerten en route to the round of 16 at Roland Garros.

Mantilla advanced to his fifth semi-final of the year and third on hardcourts with a three-set win over Kuerten. He has won six career singles titles, all on clay.

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